THE CARTER CENTER



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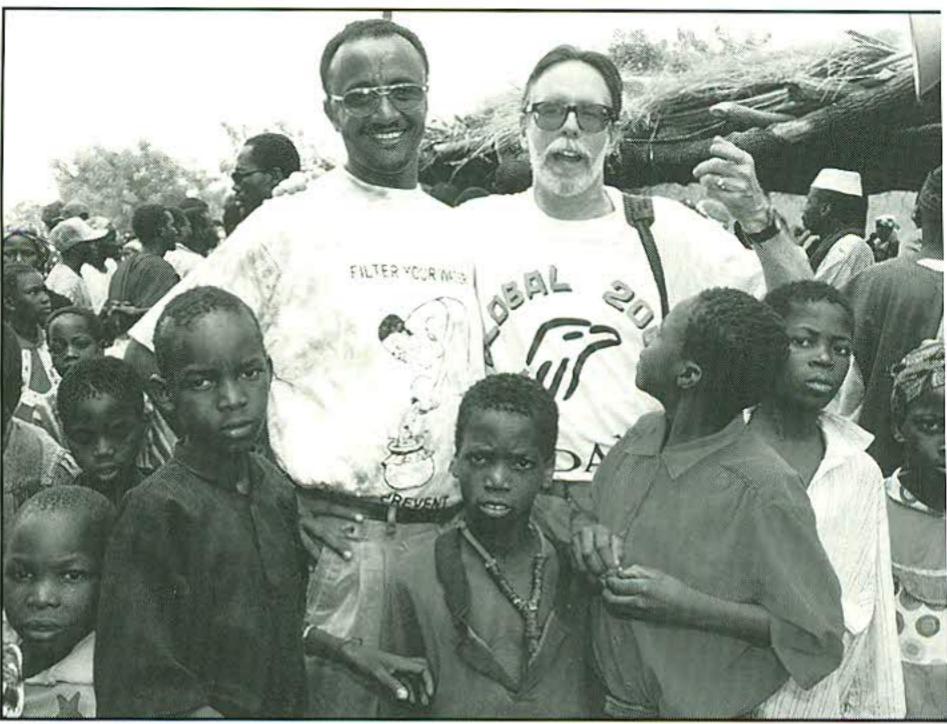
Global Partners Plot Final Assault on Guinea Worm Disease

This was the message at the Seventh African
Regional Conference on
Guinea Worm Eradication
held this spring in Bamako,
Mali. More than 200
warriors in the battle
against the dreaded disease
gathered to plot their
strategy for the final push
toward eradication.

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter praised the group for achieving a 95 percent reduction in cases but warned against complacency. "We need to concentrate our efforts on nations that still have even one

case of Guinea worm (dracunculiasis)," he said. "Let's focus on eradicating this disease, making it only the second after smallpox to be wiped off the Earth. Then we can move on to other diseases."

Gen. Amadou Toumani Touré, the former president of Mali, echoed President Carter's sentiments, issuing a "direct order" for everyone to win the war against the worm, which has existed for centuries.



Robert Grossma

Resident Technical Advisors Teshome Gebre (left) and Ross Cox are among those waging the final assault on Guinea worm disease in Africa. See page 3 to learn more about their work.

People become infected by drinking stagnant water contaminated with fleas carrying Guinea worm larvae. Inside the human body, the larvae grow to as long as 3 feet. After one year, the threadlike worm emerges slowly through a blister on the skin. Many victims immerse the area in water to soothe the burning pain.

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America Project Looks at Helping Families Leave Welfare for Work

cross the country, innovative partnerships between the public and private sectors are helping families go from welfare to work in compliance with new federal and state laws.

In March, 100 leaders from business, government, nonprofit groups, and research organizations met at The Carter Center to strategize about preparing more welfare recipients for the work force. Sponsored by the Center's America Project, the conference addressed training and hiring welfare recipients and barriers to employment, including child care and transportation.

Participants also shared success stories and lessons to help guide newer experimental programs.

"We're not simply ending welfare as we know it," said Eli Segal, president and CEO of the Welfare to Work Partnership, based in Washington, D.C. "We're helping people reclaim their independence and make better lives for themselves and their families."

Mr. Segal also stressed the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors, encouraging corpora-

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U.N. High Commissioner Mary Robinson Serves as the World's Ambassador for Human Rights

n May, The Carter Center hosted a consultation of some 30 human rights experts including Mary Robinson, U.N. high commissioner for human rights. They discussed how to increase the United Nations' capacity to protect rights in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which marks its 50th anniversary this year. Ms. Robinson, the former president of Ireland, shared her thoughts about the Declaration and human rights today:

Q: Why is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so important?

A: It represents the vision of 50 years ago, after two devastating world wars. That vision was shaped by a few people, including Eleanor Roosevelt, who recognized the importance of setting down the rights of all people at the international level. It was the first time this was done.

The Declaration addresses a broad range of rights—civil, political, economic, social, and cultural.

Q: What impact has the Declaration had during the 50 years it has been in effect?

A: It has had a huge impact. On the international level, there are two human rights Covenants,1 the core Conventions,² and U.N. treaty bodies, which monitor implementation of the Conventions and Covenants. Also, many constitutions, including those of developing countries, refer to and incorporate the Declaration's principles. It's a wonderful standard.

¹The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

Q: What would you like to see happen to strengthen human rights and the work of human rights advocates?

A: A short time ago, the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva passed the Declaration of Human Rights Defenders, which will go to the U.N. General Assembly for consideration. It took 13 years of discussion, and it is very important because it recognizes the role of individuals, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and others in protecting and promoting human rights.

Sadly, just as the Commission passed that Declaration, we had to observe a minute of silence for a well-known Colombian human rights lawyer who was brutally killed in his home. We also had the equally brutal death of the Roman Catholic bishop in Guatemala. So it's

this summer's Conference on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court in Rome: It's the network of human rights NGOs pressing for standards, principles, and values in the Court that's leading the debate. I see NGOs as partners in human rights work and as a huge resource to me and my office.

Q: How do you define your role as high commissioner, and how does the international community perceive it?

A: I have a very broad mandate. I maintain a working dialogue with all governments, regional organizations, and the NGO and academic communities for promoting and protecting human rights. The mandate makes very clear that there must be a balance among all human rights.

"Some governments, even some foundations, have stopped paying attention to human rights. It's very important that we bring back the message that human rights are crucial to preventing conflicts, to preserving the environment, to every aspect of our lives."





UN/DPI Photo

not an abstraction; there is a need, at the international level, to protect human rights defenders. That's part of reinvigorating the debate on human rights.

Q: What role do NGOs such as The Carter Center play in the human rights arena?

A: NGOs have been very important in promoting the Universal Declaration. They also play a critical role leading up to, during, and following the Commission's annual session. Each U.N. World Conference was hugely influenced by NGOs. Look at our preparations for

When I visit a country—I've been to South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Cambodia, Iran, and most recently, Morocco-I meet my colleagues working for the various U.N. agencies—UNICEF, the United Nations Development Program, the World Food Program. We discuss how together we are promoting human rights in that country. This is serving to re-energize the United Nations.

²The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Global Partners

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When the female worm touches water, she releases tens of thousands of larvae, beginning the cycle again.

Although the disease cannot be cured, it can be stopped. Villagers must filter their water. They also can use the nontoxic chemical Abate to kill larvae or drill borehole wells for fresh drinking water. Today, about 150,000 cases remain compared to more than 3.2 million in 1986.

In Mali, conference participants focused on lingering obstacles to eradication such as educating nomadic groups.

"Nomadic people can contaminate water supplies of villages through which they pass and become infected themselves by drinking contaminated water while traveling," said Donald Hopkins, M.D., associate executive director of The Carter Center. "We must identify effective methods to educate this special population about prevention."

All 16 affected African countries except Kenya were represented at the conference, which was co-sponsored by the Government of Mali, The Carter Center, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

After days of intense brainstorming, participants emerged newly energized for their continuing battle. "Eradicating a disease is a very difficult challenge," President Carter said. "We all work together in an army that is on the verge of winning a great victory."



Donald Hopkins, M.D.



Gen. Amadou Toumani Touré

CARTER CENTER FIELD STAFF BATTLE GUINEA WORM FROM THE TRENCHES

are fought in the trenches. The war against Guinea worm disease is no exception.

The Carter Center's Resident Technical Advisors (RTAs), who spend their days wrestling the "fiery serpent," shared their stories and strategies at a conference in Mali.

"We're trying innovative ways to help educate people," said Mali RTA Brad Barker, a native of Oregon. "For example, we hold a competition akin to the American game show Jeopardy. Winners receive small prizes such as cola nuts or sugar for knowing the correct answers to Guinea worm prevention questions."

"We provide incentives for village-based volunteers and other health workers to keep them focused on

eradication," noted Ethiopia RTA
Teshome Gebre. "These incentives
include Guinea worm eradication hats,
cloth, and T-shirts. We also plan to offer
training opportunities and certificates of
achievement."

Working in war-ridden Sudan presents special challenges. Fighting often prevents workers from reaching remote areas that may be infected. Most of the world's remaining Guinea worm cases are in Sudan.

"I believe progress can be made toward eradicating Guinea worm, even under current circumstances," said Elvin Hilyer, an RTA in northern Sudan. "However, eradication will come only after all parts of the country are accessible."

The RTA for southern Sudan, Ross Cox, agreed. "Eradication efforts are taking hold in areas not so hard hit by famine and war. Some parts of Sudan have the capacity to move ahead and become more self-sufficient."

Robert Grossman

RTAs use tools like this illustration to show people how they become infected with Guinea worm disease.

After the Guinea worm conference, the RTAs took CNN staff and several Peace Corps volunteers to Nerenikoro, a remote village deep in the bush in southeastern Mali. Residents there had not experienced a Guinea worm case in more than 20 years and thought they had eliminated it. Not surprisingly, the community no longer took preventive measures against the disease. Then, in 1997, four villagers became infected. A stranger

walking along a path near their farmland probably contaminated their water supply.

The Nerenikoro experience illustrates the need for a final assault to wipe out Guinea worm. "When you get down to 100 cases in an entire nation, people often assume they've achieved victory and then back away from strict adherence to prevention," said Mark Pelletier, RTA in Uganda. "The next thing you know, you've got an outbreak in a village like Nerenikoro, which thought it was free of the disease. It's proof that until every Guinea worm is gone, the threat remains."

Translating Words Into Action:

Carter Center and Its Partners Help Weave Human Rights Into the Fabric of Society

ifty years ago, world leaders mourning the Holocaust made a commitment to freedom and peace by adopting the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since then, securing the liberties of people worldwide has progressed, but much work remains.

The Carter Center translates the Declaration's words into actions by helping strengthen international systems to enforce human rights standards and by encouraging emerging democracies to promote respect for and protect those rights.

"Advancing human rights is the foundation for our work at The Carter Center," former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said. "Our efforts aim to prevent abuses, not just correct them after they occur. Vast amounts of suffering and money can be spared if we address problems early and attempt to weave respect for human rights into the fabric of societies."

Building International Cooperation

The Carter Center's International Human Rights Council brings together nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and representatives of agencies from around the world to combine their influence in addressing key human rights issues. This collaboration has generated greater political and financial support for the U.N. human rights system by:

- Successfully advocating the establishment of the U.N. high commissioner for human rights post in 1994.
- Advancing NGO access to the U.N. deliberative process.
- Promoting the establishment of an independent, effective International Criminal Court (ICC).
- Pushing for greater resources for U.N. human rights investigators, special rapporteurs, and working groups.

Still, many challenges await. The U.N. budget for human rights is grossly

inadequate, and in particular, human rights investigators suffer from insufficient resources. These highly qualified, dedicated people usually are volunteers, working with little or no administrative or professional support. Yet their efforts are pivotal in determining the extent of abuses and attempts to stop them.

"Increasingly, governments suspected of abuses are blocking, harassing, or ignoring these investigators as they try to



Kathryn Kolb

Mary Robinson, U.N. high commissioner for human rights, joined other experts for a consultation at The Carter Center in May. The Center and other NGOs advocated creation of her post in 1994 to give greater voice to human rights efforts worldwide.

do their jobs," said Karin Ryan, vice chair of The Carter Center's Human Rights Committee. "Greater funding and political support for their work is imperative to enforce the tenets of the Universal Declaration and to protect basic liberties."

Also critical to deterring human rights abuses is establishing a permanent ICC to try individuals believed to have committed war crimes, genocide, or crimes against humanity. In the past year, the Center advanced the nearly 40-year-old ICC debate by hosting two conferences on the role of the United States. Participants discussed various options, including whether the court will be independent from the U.N. Security Council and how the prosecutor will initiate investigations. The ICC is the topic of a major U.N. conference in Rome this summer.

"Genocide and other horrible crimes took place in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina, but few of the perpetrators have been tried and punished. It took years to organize ad hoc tribunals in those regions," said Harry Barnes, director of the Center's Conflict Resolution Program and chair of the Human Rights Committee. "With a permanent court of international criminal justice, perpetrators could be brought to trial more quickly, and future crimes might be deterred."

Crafting National Frameworks

National institutions and laws that protect human rights are essential to securing democracy. The Carter Center strives to help new and struggling democracies educate citizens and to incorporate human rights precepts into social institutions such as the educa-



A woman who witnessed the genocide in Rwanda recounts her experience to Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter. The Carter Center supports creation of an International Criminal Court to help deter such atrocities.

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tional system, the judiciary, and law enforcement.

"Countries in transition from war to peace or from military to civilian rule can face daunting challenges to reconstruct basic social services as well as the ideas on which society is organized," Mr. Barnes said. "We try to find ways to help governments that are willing to build institutions to protect human rights in the long run."

In Ethiopia, the Center worked with the Ministry of Education to teach children about human rights through mandatory curricula such as civics classes and soon will help Ethiopian judges and lawyers implement human rights principles in courtrooms. As Guyana consolidates participatory democracy, community workshops are improving the relationship between police and citizens. And in Liberia, Center staff sponsored seminars on press freedom and responsibility and on human rights education and monitoring. They also are helping the new Liberian Commission on Human Rights refine its mandate and are working with Liberia's law school and judiciary to strengthen the rule of law.

"These initiatives are important because they are preventive," Mr. Barnes said. "Policies give us a guideline for progress, but the path to permanent peace is paved by individual and collective actions, step by step."

Strengthening Human Rights Work

At The Carter Center, the next step in human rights promotion and protection is to incorporate them into all of its programs and projects.

"Human rights do not exist in a vacuum," said Carter Center Associate Executive Director Gordon Streeb.
"Human rights principles must be incorporated into economic development strategies, health care and nutrition policies, labor practices, and other social sector activities that put ideas into practice."

For this reason, human rights staff now collaborate with program teams on Center projects to advance democracy, prevent and resolve conflicts, promote health and well-being, and enhance global development.

"The 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights offers individuals and institutions an opportunity to renew their commitment to its principles," Mr. Barnes said. "We've made a lot of progress but not enough to be complacent."

Economic Development Projects Planned in Three Countries

Guyana prepare a National Development Strategy drawing to a close,
The Carter Center's Global Development
Initiative (GDI) hopes to take its
innovative model of participatory
economic and social planning to Albania, Mozambique, and Mali.

"We will encourage an even greater degree of grassroots involvement and input from all sectors of society in development planning in these countries than we did in Guyana," said Gordon Streeb, associate executive director of The Carter Center. "Not only does it create broad-based national consensus on development goals, but citizen participation strengthens democracy and respect for human rights."

Although these countries face different economic and social challenges, government officials in each agree a comprehensive strategy would help ensure that donor assistance supports economic priorities set by citizens themselves. The Carter Center will organize a process in each nation involving representatives from civil society, business, government, and other sectors who would participate in crafting the strategies.

"Our goal is to help each government create a policy that all key stakeholders in society buy into, that reassures donors a plan is in place for the responsible use of foreign aid, and that gives developing nations more influence in the use of the aid offered them," Dr. Streeb said.

GDI projects are in the design phase in Albania, Mozambique, and Mali pending funding for full implementation.

Georgia Forum Identifies Strategies To Improve Mental Health Services for Children

The day things changed was when someone finally sat down with me and explained what was going on in my brain," said Danielle Smith. "That's when I realized something actually was wrong with me. I wasn't just crazy."

Ms. Smith, a 22-year-old diagnosed with schizophrenia and manic depression, told her story to a group of 350 mental health care providers, advocates, and consumers at the May "Rosalynn Carter Georgia Mental Health Forum." Participants at the event, "Children's Mental Health: Generating Hope Through Shared Responsibility," discussed strategies to improve children's mental health services from various perspectives including those of business, insurance, and foundation representatives; faith group and family members; and juvenile justice and clinical personnel.

"The Forum made it clear that there



are effective treatments, we know how to provide them, and we need to tell that story so that resources are made available to children who need help," said John Gates, director of The Carter Center's Mental Health Program.

In its third year, the Forum touched on several issues covered in Mrs. Carter's new book, Helping Someone With Mental Illness: A Compassionate Guide for Family, Friends, and Caregivers (Times Books, 1998), which covers the scientific, social, and health care aspects of mental illness; symptoms; and treatment.

"With our new knowledge of the

brain, medication and treatment methods for mental illnesses have changed dramatically," writes Mrs. Carter. "These illnesses can now be diagnosed. They can be treated, and the overwhelming majority of people who suffer can lead normal lives—living at home, working, being productive citizens. I want everyone to know that."



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Rosalynn Carter and Sue Smith, executive director of the Georgia Parent Support Network, ring the Mental Health Bell to close the third annual Georgia Mental Health Forum.

River Blindness Treatments Increase 34 Percent in 1997

The Carter Center's Global 2000 River Blindness Program (GRBP) helped provide 5.1 million treatments for river blindness in 1997. Working with local health workers in Latin America, Cameroon, Nigeria, Sudan, and Uganda, GRBP's total distribution increased 34 percent compared to 1996.

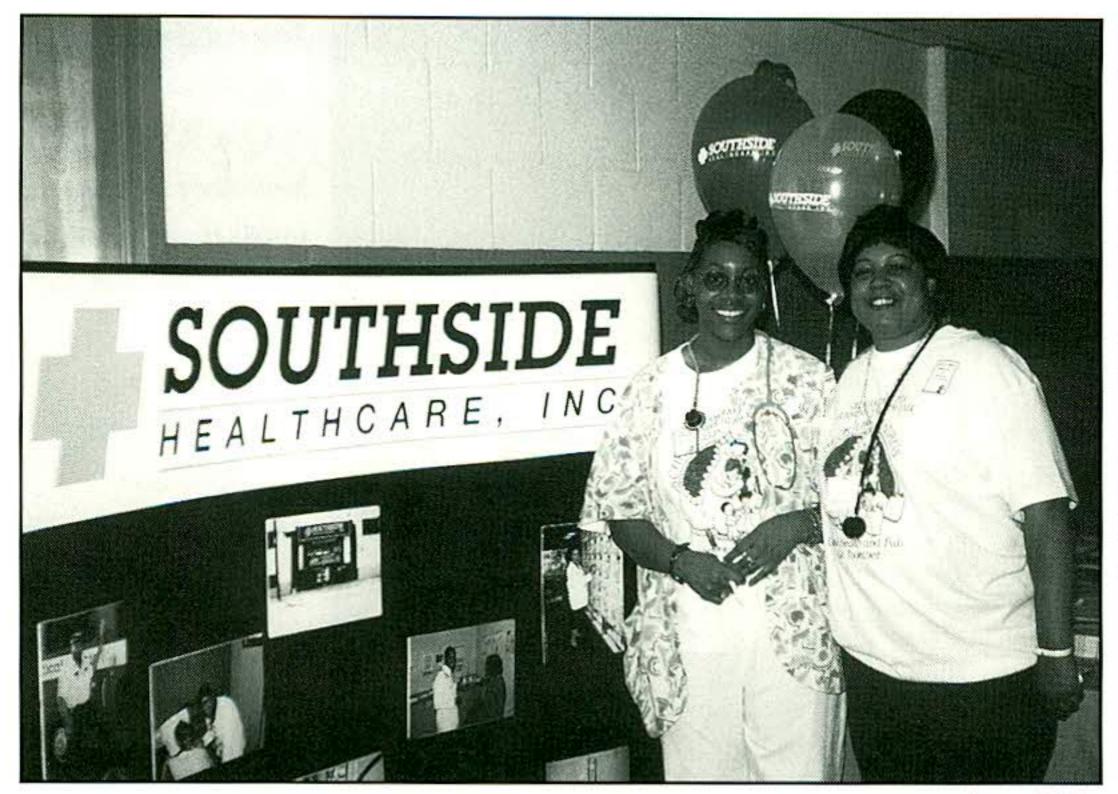
"We are pleased with the steady growth of our program and grateful for the significant contributions made by our many partners including Merck, Lions Clubs, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and others," said Frank Richards, M.D., technical director of GRBP. "Our colleagues in partner countries are working hard to alleviate the suffering associated with river blindness, and we hope to assist them in providing almost 6 million Mectizan® treatments by the end of 1998."

River blindness (*onchocerciasis*) is a parasitic infection that causes incessant itching, skin rashes, eyesight damage, and often blindness. The pharmaceutical company Merck and Co. Inc. discovered Mectizan®, which prevents the disease through a single yearly treatment. In 1987, Merck decided to donate the drug to all infected people for as long as necessary. Since then, The Carter Center and other partners have provided more than 100 million treatments to help control the disease in many parts of the world.

Atlanta Project Launches Child Health/ Immunization Initiative

hy would 200 parents and children go to school on a sunny Saturday in May? To learn more about keeping their families healthy.

The health fair at Gresham Park Elementary School in DeKalb County, Ga., launched a new child health/ immunization initiative facilitated by



Southside
Healthcare and
other partners
kicked off The
Atlanta Project's
child health/
immunization
initiative at
Gresham Park
Elementary
School in DeKalb
County, Ga.

Rosemarie Kobau

The Atlanta Project (TAP). The fair offered preventive health screenings, immunizations for children, entertainment, and information booths covering a variety of health topics.

"This is the first of several collaborations among school systems, community residents, major health care providers, advocacy and social support agencies, academic institutions, and businesses in Fulton, Clayton, and DeKalb counties," said Darryl James, TAP's health project manager. "We believe this is the beginning of a more aggressive, reliable, and accessible health care delivery system to traditionally underserved populations."

A program of The Carter Center, TAP helps some of Atlanta's neediest citizens address quality-of-life issues through partnership and collaboration. Current projects focus on after-school activities for middle school students, pre-kindergarten classes for 4-year-olds, job training and placement for welfare recipients, and vaccinations and health care for young children.

The Gresham Park health fair involved several community partners: the Gresham Park Elementary School PTA, Southside Healthcare Inc., the DeKalb County Board of Health, Clayton College and State University, FamilyPlus, and TAP.

"Southside Healthcare is pleased to join The Atlanta Project in promoting prevention and wellness among our youth," said David Williams, M.D., Southside's CEO. "By teaching future leaders about health, we can prevent many of the diseases that affect adults today."

Council Seeks Support for Arms Restraint in the Western Hemisphere

The Carter Center continues to pursue the issue of arms restraint in the Americas.

In early April, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, former Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, and former Bolivian President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada sent a letter to 34 presidents and prime ministers in the Western Hemisphere. Their letter urged leaders to address conventional arms control at the 1998 Summit of the Americas, held April 18-19 in Santiago, Chile. Although the topic was not on the agenda, several leaders attending the conference raised it.

"We were encouraged by the support that several Latin American and Caribbean leaders gave to the initiative," said Robert Pastor, director of The Carter Center's Latin American and Caribbean Program. "Those governments considering significant arms purchases found themselves on the defensive, trying to justify their decisions to their people and colleagues. Over the long run, this will

become more difficult for them to do."

The Carter Center sent the letter after co-hosting a March 25 conference with the Council for a Livable World to discuss the Summit agenda, which focused on education.

"It is wrong for Latin American governments to spend our scarce resources to keep huge armed forces, which are not needed any more," said Nobel laureate Oscar Arias, who co-led the March conference with Presidents Carter and Sánchez de Lozada. "We should be spending those resources on education."

All three leaders are members of The Carter Center's Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, which promotes democracy and economic cooperation in the hemisphere. Their work helped draw

A poll conducted by

The Wall Street Journal
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Latin American countries."

attention to an issue that has public support. For example, a poll conducted by *The Wall Street Journal* showed that 69 percent of Latin Americans and 85 percent of Americans "are against the sale of high-tech weapons to Latin American countries."

"We'll continue to pursue arms control in the Western Hemisphere," Dr. Pastor said. "The Carter Center also is collaborating with nongovernmental organizations in Europe to build support for arms restraint."

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http://www.emory.edu/
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Village Elections Project Begins in China

Carter Center delegation traveled to China in June to help its government establish a data collection system for village elections and standardizing procedures nationwide. Their visit is the result of a landmark agreement signed by the People's Republic of China and the Center this spring.

"We are very excited about this project," former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said. "We hope the cooperation we develop with the Chinese government will help improve the village election process and serve as a foundation for direct elections at higher levels of government in the future."

The delegation and China's Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) will install the data system in nine counties in Fujian, Hunan, and Jilin provinces. Village officials will record and assess election results on survey forms and send them to the county level for computer entry. Officials then will determine which elections were democratic and competitive, as law requires, and which ones were flawed.

"Since 1987, the Organic Law on Village Elections—an outgrowth of reforms by the late Premier Deng Xiao-



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Township officials

chair, and twice

ping—has mandated the basic elements of democratic elections such as a secret ballot, freedom of choice, a public count, and regular elections," said Robert Pastor, director of the Center's China Village Elections Project. "But no one knows how many villages are following the rules. The new data system will help answer that question."

A second Carter Center delegation will travel to China in August to continue work on the system. In July, a high-level Chinese delegation from the MCA and the three pilot provinces will observe Georgia's primary elections during the first of two visits to Atlanta.

In addition, the Center is planning a voter education project to teach villagers why their ballots count and

why they need to vote in private.

Last year, a Carter Center delegation first observed local elections in Fujian and Hebei provinces at the invitation of the Chinese government. A second delegation visited in March this year to observe nine village elections in Jilin and Liaoning provinces. The China Village Elections Project agreement was signed during the trip.

"Much remains to be done for village elections in China to become a firm foundation for grassroots democracy," said Dr. Pastor, who has led each delegation. "But we are impressed by the villagers' determination to have free and fair elections and by the government's commitment to improve the process to ensure genuine competition."

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tions to join in making new welfare laws successful. "Contrary to myth, this is not about corporate responsibility—it's about bottom-line benefits," he added.

"Our goal is to create enough economic independence to eliminate the need for welfare programs," said Frank Belatti, president of AFC Enterprises in Atlanta.

Participants such as Mr. Belatti and

Mr. Segal share The America Project's philosophy of addressing U.S. urban ills through partnership and collaboration. The Project is a forum for sharing lessons and approaches learned by The Atlanta Project (TAP), The Carter Center's program to help inner-city families with quality-of-life issues.

The America Project's March meeting initiated a conference series related to current TAP projects, which include a welfare-to-work initiative, after-school programs, pre-kindergarten education, and child health/immunization efforts. "Promising Practices: Communities Investing in Adolescents," a conference on programs for teens during nonschool hours, will be held in August.

In addition to meetings, The America Project provides publications and videos and hosts U.S. and international delegations who want to learn more about TAP and other communitybuilding initiatives. Leaders from Saskatchewan, Canada, will visit Atlanta this summer, while others will travel from London this fall.