

United States General Accounting Office

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**International Affairs  
Issue Area**

**Active Assignments**

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# Foreword

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This report was prepared primarily to inform Congressional members and key staff of ongoing assignments in the General Accounting Office's International Affairs issue area. This report contains assignments that were ongoing as of July 6, 1995, and presents a brief background statement and a list of key questions to be answered on each assignment. The report will be issued quarterly.

This report was compiled from information available in GAO's internal management information systems. Because the information was downloaded from computerized data bases intended for internal use, some information may appear in abbreviated form.

If you have questions or would like additional information about assignments listed, please contact Joseph Kelley, Director; Harold J. Johnson, Associate Director; or Benjamin Nelson, Associate Director, on (202) 512-4128.

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## *International Affairs*

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### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS**

**TITLE: STATE DEPARTMENT: MANAGEMENT OF VISA, PASSPORT, AND OTHER CONSULAR PROGRAMS (711044)**

**BACKGROUND :** Changes in U.S. immigration law, unchecked and increasing worldwide demand for consular services, pervasive consular and passport fraud overseas at U.S. agencies, and errors by U.S. officials in providing visas to Sheik Rahman, clearly demonstrate the need for State to identify new and more efficient ways to manage its consular workload.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Is State making progress in correcting identified management problems in the visa and passport functions? (2) Are all Consular services essential, who benefits and are service fees appropriate? (3) Can overlapping responsibilities of State, Immigration and Naturalization Service and other agencies be better managed? (4) Are there opportunities to achieve cost savings?

**TITLE: EVALUATION OF U.S. DEMOCRACY PROGRAMS OVERSEAS (711058)**

**BACKGROUND :** One of President Clinton's foreign policy goals is the promotion of democracy. To further this goal, numerous government agencies have undertaken democracy-related programs. GAO was asked to assess the level of coordination and duplication among various agencies' programs and the effectiveness and impact of these projects.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How well are democracy programs coordinated at headquarters and in selected countries? (2) Are funding sources and democracy-related programs duplicative in selected countries? (3) What is the impact of selected programs in those countries? (4) How can the coordination and delineation of roles and responsibilities among relevant agencies be improved?

**TITLE: STATUS OF ACTIONS TO IMPROVE OVERSEAS MISSION MANAGEMENT (711073)**

**BACKGROUND :** Past GAO reports identified weaknesses in State's management of its overseas posts and made recommendations to correct these problems. House Report 103-409 also made recommendations for improving State's overseas operations. Historically, State has been slow to implement management improvement actions.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What actions have been taken at headquarters or embassies, to improve management controls, and have these actions resulted in positive change? (2) Are embassy operations still plagued by management deficiencies? (3) Are there good management practices at some embassies that can be replicated to improve management operations at other embassies?

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### FOREIGN AFFAIRS STRUCTURES AND FUNCTIONS

**TITLE: HRA 8: IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT REDUCING ITS APPROPRIATION NEEDS BY IDENTIFYING AND EXPEDITIOUSLY DISPOSING OF EXCESS OVERSEAS REAL ESTATE AND PRUDENTLY USING THE PROCEEDS? (711115)**

**BACKGROUND :** State owns about \$12 billion in real estate at more than 260 locations overseas. It has unique authority to sell real estate and use the proceeds for other property purchases and renovations without specific congressional or OMB approval.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Does State have a system for ensuring and documenting that excess real estate is identified, sales decisions are expeditiously made, and taxpayers' interests are considered? (2) Does State have a system for ensuring that sales proceeds are properly accounted for, reported to the Congress, and used for pressing needs?

**TITLE: EVALUATION OF STATE'S FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES IN A REDUCED BUDGETARY ENVIRONMENT (711134)**

**BACKGROUND :** Congress has proposed significant reductions to the International Affairs budget. A House Committee asked GAO to evaluate the functions performed by State (e.g., reporting and analysis, trade/finance promotion) to assist the Committee in determining what functions could be eliminated or done in a more cost efficient manner.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** What functions and activities of State: (1) are not closely linked to U.S. policy priorities; (2) are extraordinarily expensive given their impact; (3) could be privatized; (4) could be performed more efficiently through use of changing technology; (5) are duplicative or work at cross purposes with other functions; and (6) are not valued by customers?

### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: ROLE OF PRIVATE VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS (PVO) IN DEVELOPMENT (711046)**

**BACKGROUND :** PVOs currently receive about \$1.5 billion, administered by the AID. Congress has urged U.S. AID to expand support for PVOs' international development activities. However, concerns remain about the effectiveness of PVO programs in bringing about long-term improvements in development.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How effective are PVOs in enhancing development? (2) What role should PVOs play in delivering U.S. foreign assistance? (3) How dependent are PVOs on U.S. government financing and what is the impact of dependency? (4) Is the working relationship between U.S. AID and the PVOs effective and efficient?

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: ASSESSMENT OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS (MFO) A PEACEKEEPING ALTERNATIVE (711067)**

**BACKGROUND :** The MFO is an independently chartered peacekeeping organization established and paid for by the U.S., Egypt, and Israel. Since 1982, MFO has enforced Israeli and Egyptian adherence to the Camp David Peace Accord. Internationally, MFO is viewed as an effective peacekeeping alternative. U.S. military troops serve in MFO.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the successes that have given the MFO prominence as an effective peacekeeping operation? (2) What is the actual cost of MFO operations and the U.S. contribution? (3) How are logistics and procurement functions handled? (4) What are the State Department and other relevant party views of the MFO mandate? (5) How are U.S. troops selected and trained?

**TITLE: ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND HOST NATIONS WORLDWIDE ON THE RESIDUAL VALUE OF OVERSEAS MILITARY FACILITIES BEING RETURNED (711085)**

**BACKGROUND :** Under a massive military drawdown, the U.S. is vacating hundreds of facilities and returning them to host governments worldwide. In many countries, the U.S. is seeking to recoup a settlement for the investments made in these facilities. However, this "residual value" must be negotiated with each host nation under established agreements.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the recovery rights in countries where the U.S. is returning installations? (2) How did the U.S. value the installations being returned in each host nation? (3) What are the negotiating strategy and status of negotiations in each country? (4) What obstacles exist in each country?

**TITLE: FOREIGN ASSISTANCE: FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (711090)**

**BACKGROUND :** In September 1993, the PLO and Israel signed a Declaration of Principles, which called for limited Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho through a new entity called the Palestinian National Authority. The United States and other donors have pledged \$2.4 billion over 5 years for development projects in Gaza and the West Bank.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** What are the PLO's assets, sources and amounts of income, and financial responsibilities, and what other funds does the PLO claim they should receive?

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: PEACE OPERATIONS: EFFORTS TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS (711093)**

**BACKGROUND :** With 25 ongoing peace operations and numerous hot spots, multilateral peacekeeping has become a crucial tool in advancing U.S. interests. But success has been limited. To make operations more effective, Presidential Directive 25 (PD25) and recent legislation were developed to strengthen the U.S. response; the U.N. also introduced reforms.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Do U.S. agencies have adequate resources and coordination to respond to peace operations under PD25 and new legislation? (2) How effective has the U.S. response been to recent international crises? (3) What are recent U.N. reforms in peacekeeping, and have they improved the effectiveness of operations?

**TITLE: IMPACT OF NATO'S NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT ON ALLIES' COMMITMENTS (711105)**

**BACKGROUND :** With the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO), NATO adopted a new strategic concept that calls for making new military commitments and assisting and possibly granting membership to former WTO members. However, NATO member military budgets have declined, and some members want to establish separate military agreements.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are NATO members' commitments in response to the new strategic concept? (2) What are impacts of members future defense budgets on NATO commitments? (3) What is the impacts of the proposed German/French Corp. that would support the Western European Union? (4) What are considerations for opening NATO to new members?

**TITLE: WORLD BANK/INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF) COMPENSATION (711114)**

**BACKGROUND :** The IMF are required by charter to maintain a multinational workforce. Critics believe that compensation and benefits for this workforce are higher than warranted when compared with equivalent positions in member countries and other international organizations.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** How do salaries and benefits paid to employees of the World Bank and IMF compare with those paid to employees holding comparable positions in the public and private sectors in member countries and in the international sector?

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: U.S. AID'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN FOR HAITI (711117)**

**BACKGROUND :** The U.S. Agency for International Development is part of an international effort to assist Haiti. Emergency needs are estimated at \$620 million, of which the U.S. has pledged more than \$200 million. Total donor pledges exceed \$1.2 billion. AID is involved in all aspects of Haiti's recovery and has taken a lead role in improving governance, such as training a police force.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How well has AID's overall recovery program been planned, coordinated, and managed to achieve its intended effects and to avoid potential long-term U.S. financial commitments to Haiti? (2) How well are specific sector programs, such as the justice and police training program, being managed and coordinated with Haiti and other donors to achieve intended results?

**TITLE: EFFECTIVENESS OF U.S. STRATEGIES TO STOP THE FLOW OF HEROIN AND COCAINE (711119)**

**BACKGROUND :** In 1993, the U.S. made a major change in its international drug control strategy by shifting resources from programs focused on intercepting drugs in transit to programs in the drug source countries. There is concern that this shift has had no noticeable impact on drug availability. In FY 1994, \$1.6 billion was spent to stop the flow of drugs into the United States.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the role, mission, organization, and programs of U.S. agencies involved in international drug control? (2) What are the drug production and trafficking problems confronting the U.S. in Colombia, Burma, and Mexico? (3) What are the domestic and international impediments to more effective U.S. drug interdiction efforts in these countries?

**TITLE: PEACE OPERATIONS: U.S. COST FOR PEACE OPERATIONS IN HAITI, RWANDA, BOSNIA, AND SOMALIA (711124)**

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: FOLLOWUP INSPECTION ON UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR) PROGRAM AUDITS (711130)**

**TITLE: U.S. CARE AND PROCESSING OF CUBAN IMMIGRANTS (711131)**

**BACKGROUND :** Under a Sept. 1994 U.S./Cuba agreement, Cuban migrants could remain in U.S. camps, return to Cuba to apply for a visa through the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, or seek to qualify for humanitarian parole to the U.S. As of March 1995, 28,000 migrants remained at Guantanamo. GAO has been asked by Representatives to examine U.S. policies for migrants' care and processing.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the number of migrants under U.S. care and the cost to provide the care? (2) What are their living conditions? (3) What are the U.S. long-term plans and policies for dealing with the Cuban migrants? (4) Can the U.S. Interests Section efficiently process the expected number of visa applicants?

**TITLE: WORLD BANK COSTS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE FINANCING (711132)**

**BACKGROUND :** The World Bank is the single largest source of development assistance and plays a key role in economic reform. However, the Bank's effectiveness has increasingly been questioned both internally and externally. Congress is concerned with the viability of the Bank as a development institution.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) In which countries and sectors is the Bank having a major development impact? (2) In which countries and sectors is the Bank duplicating or competing with services provided by the private sector? (3) What are the costs and financial arrangements that support Bank activities?

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## *International Affairs*

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: AID'S CHILD SURVIVAL FUND ACTIVITIES (711137)**

**BACKGROUND :** Although legislation refers to the "Child Survival Fund", there is no fund per se but a Congressional target for that activity is set for FY 1995 at \$275 million from all AID accounts. Activities supported by this fund address the special health needs of children and mothers, including immunizations, oral rehydration and education programs.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Which entities does AID use to channel Child Development Funds to beneficiary countries? (2) What criteria are used for selecting and approving projects for these funds? (3) How well is the program being managed?

**TITLE: IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING AND RELIEF EFFORTS IN CAMBODIA (711138)**

**BACKGROUND :** The U.S. was assessed over \$600 million for UN operations to end Cambodia's civil war, hold elections, and promote economic and political reconstruction. These operations were the most comprehensive and expensive ever undertaken, costing about \$2 billion.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What were UN and U.S. objectives and contributions for promoting peace and stability in Cambodia? (2) How successful was the UN in achieving these objectives and ensuring their sustainability? (3) What factors contributed to or impeded the sustainability of the mission's goals?

**TITLE: PANAMA: DRAWDOWN PLANS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY (711141)**

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### U. S. INFLUENCE AND ASSISTANCE

**TITLE: TESTIMONY RELATING TO U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOUSING GUARANTY PROGRAM (711144)**

**TITLE: TESTIMONY ON NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY AND STATUS PPD-14 FOR COUNTERNARCOTICS (711146)**

### ARMS CONTROL AND NONPROLIFERATION

**TITLE: POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT IN TRANSFER OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT EQUIPMENT MATERIAL OR TECHNOLOGY (711088)**

**BACKGROUND :** The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended prohibits U.S. assistance to any country transferring or receiving uranium enrichment equipment unless International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards are in place.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Did Turkey export uranium enrichment equipment to Pakistan, and if so which items? (2) Were U.S. requirements and positions communicated to Turkey? (3) Why were necessary waivers and certifications not secured for subsequent assistance to Turkey?

**ARMS CONTROL AND NONPROLIFERATION**

**TITLE: NUCLEAR MATERIAL CONTROLS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) (711098)**

**BACKGROUND :** Concern is mounting that deteriorating economic and social conditions in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) could accelerate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and advanced conventional arms. Nonproliferation controls, such as export controls, material control and accountancy, either don't exist or may not have been effectively implemented.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the nature and extent of the nuclear material control problem in the FSU? (2) What is the status and prognoses of U.S. programs to assist the FSU in strengthening nuclear controls? (3) How will proposed transfer of Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) portion of program from DOD to the Department of Energy affect program implementation?

**TITLE: COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION (CTR) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION (711106)**

**BACKGROUND :** The CTR program assists the FSU in dismantling weapons of mass destruction. GAO has recommended that DOD develop a strategic implementation plan to ensure proper program funding. Legislation directs DOD to issue a report on its audit and examination of procedures for CTR assistance delivered to the FSU and requires GAO to comment on DOD's report.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) How complete are DOD's audit and evaluation plans for the CTR program? (2) What is the status of the projects and the amount of assistance delivered to the FSU? (3) What difficulties have CTR officials encountered in implementing the program and determining that the assistance being provided is used for the purposes intended?

**TITLE: COMMITMENTS AND AGREEMENTS TO SUPPORT RUSSIAN DESTRUCTION OF CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS (711109)**

**BACKGROUND :** To help Russia destroy its chemical and biological weapons the administration is considering offering \$500 million to \$1 billion to support Russia's destruction programs. GAO has been asked by a House Committee to review the administration's plans.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What commitments has the administration made to support the Russian chemical weapons destruction program? (2) When is Russia expected to be in a position to effectively use U.S. and other donor chemical weapons destruction assistance? (3) What obstacles confront the implementation of U.S. destruction strategy?

**FORMER SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE**

**TITLE: U.S. SUPPORT FOR RESTRUCTURING THE POLISH ECONOMY (711032)**

**BACKGROUND :** U.S. economic assistance to Poland, in concert with that of other donors and by leveraging both Polish and foreign private-sector investment, is intended to assist in democratization and creation of a market economy. A key element of U.S. assistance is aimed at restructuring state-owned enterprises.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Is there a coherent strategy for restructuring efforts? (2) What are the principal impediments, and how are they being addressed? (3) How effective are U.S. assistance efforts?

**TITLE: EFFECTIVENESS OF AID-MANAGED FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROJECTS IN RUSSIA (711095)**

**BACKGROUND :** For 1990-94, the U.S. committed \$2.9 billion in grant assistance to Russia. The Freedom Support Act in 1992 allowed the AID to rapidly accelerate assistance to Russia. Recent work by GAO and AID's Inspector General have identified problems in projects, coordination, management, and effectiveness.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Are project objectives consistent with overall U.S. strategy in Russia, congressional intent, and Russia's priority needs? (2) Are the individual projects meeting their goals, objectives, and milestones? (3) Is U.S. AID providing adequate program and financial management of the projects?

**TITLE: COST OF U.S. BILATERAL PROGRAMS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 1994 (711123)**

**BACKGROUND :** GAO has been asked to update its previous work on the costs of the multi-billion dollar U.S. bilateral program in the former Soviet Union (NSIAD-95-10).

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are the costs of U.S. grant assistance, donation, and credit programs in the FSU through the end of FY94? (2) What are the appropriation source and budget account for these funds? (3) What programs are being implemented with these funds?

**FORMER SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE**

**TITLE: UPDATE ON COORDINATION OF U.S. BILATERAL PROGRAM TO THE FORMER SOVIET UNION (711125)**

**BACKGROUND :** Congress has already held hearings in CY 1995 on weaknesses in former Soviet Union (FSU) program management and coordination. An important input into Congressional scrutiny was the recently issued GAO report, GAO/NSIAD-95-10, on FSU program coordination. GAO has been asked to update the coordination issues identified in the report.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) Has the Administration strengthened the coordination process for the bilateral program, in particular the capacity of the coordinator to coordinate non-Freedom-Support Act programs; (2) Has USAID established a positive and productive working relationship with the other government agencies implementing the program and with the coordinator.

**TITLE: PROMOTING DEMOCRACY IN RUSSIA: U.S. ASSISTANCE IN A DIFFICULT ENVIRONMENT (711129)**

**TITLE: ASSISTANCE FOR FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) LAW ENFORCEMENT AND JUDICIAL REVIEW (711135)**

**BACKGROUND :** The breakdown of authority in the FSU has reportedly resulted in an alarming increase in crime. There is concern that drugs and arms smuggling are rampant; that extortion siphons-off money needed to revive the economy; and that mafia infiltration of reform efforts hinders foreign investment. The U.S. has a \$30 million assistance program to help combat crime in the FSU.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What is the scope of the problem and its impact on reforms? (2) How effective is U.S. government assistance and are there additional low-cost measures available to address the crime issue?

**FORMER SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE**

**TITLE: CRITERIA FOR CENTRAL EUROPE AND FORMER SOVIET UNION (FSU) GRADUATION FROM U.S. ASSISTANCE (711136)**

**BACKGROUND :** The U.S. objective for aid to the former Soviet Bloc is to promote democracies and market economies. Aid is scheduled to end in 1998. Aid agencies should have measurable criteria for knowing when aid can be replaced by other economic relationships. Criteria for graduation is key to the effectiveness of the structure and type of aid provided to achieve U.S. national security objectives.

**KEY QUESTIONS :** (1) What are U.S. criteria for ending aid and will they achieve U.S. goals and objectives? (2) What external factors affect these objectives and are there contingencies? (3) Have U.S. agencies ways to measure progress toward meeting criteria? (4) What conditions allowed Czech and Estonia to be graduated and can these conditions be expected in other countries?

