



The Communiqué

Are Iran's Nuclear Ambitions a Threat to World Security?

President Bush and Secretary of State Rice have both called Iran's uranium enrichment program a threat to world peace and security. Is this reminiscent of Iraq? Or is this Iranian effort merely an attempt to build a deterrent to Iran's nuclear neighbors and potential enemies like the United States.

Thursday, April 20, a senior Department of State official and a UCSD Iranian expert will participate in a panel discussion at Tom Ham's Lighthouse Restaurant. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Gordon Gray, will outline the U.S. policy position, while UCSD Professor, Babak Rahimi analyzes the Iranian stance in this critical confrontation.

**Seating is limited
Make your reservation today!**

**Thursday, April 20, 2006
11:30 a.m. check-in; 12:00 noon lunch
Tom Ham's Lighthouse Restaurant
2150 Harbor Island Dr. San Diego**

\$29 Members; \$34 Non-Members
buffet luncheon
(cash bar available; ample free parking)

**Please call for reservations: 619.325.8200
Deadline of April 18 (no refunds after that date)**



WorldQuest 2006 is Here!



Put on your thinking caps because WorldQuest 2006 has arrived! The San Diego World Affairs Council cordially invites all members and their colleagues to this annual international trivia competition.

WorldQuest is an exciting internationally focused group trivia contest played by teams of 8 players. It is fun, fast-paced and a great way to test your knowledge about the world. Anyone can play; teams can be formed by businesses, corporations, schools or groups of friends. Don't worry if you don't have a team of 8; we'll match you up with the perfect table.

WorldQuest consists of five rounds of multiple choice questions with each table submitting a single answer sheet at the end of each round. The team with the most points at the end of round five wins first prize. Questions will be relevant and timely, covering such issues as current events, people, geography, world history, international politics and culture.

Come early and bid in our silent auction. We'll have a myriad of terrific gifts including tickets to plays and musical performances, cruises on San Diego Bay, and wonderfully creative baskets of edible goodies donated by many of your board members.

Don't miss the fun – call NOW for reservations!

**Sunday, April 23, 2006
Registration & Silent Auction 12:00 Noon
Luncheon 12:30 p.m.
Competition 1:00 p.m.
The Great Hall at International House
UC San Diego Campus in La Jolla**

**Price: \$50 Individuals; \$400 Tables of Eight
Free parking in Pangea Parking Structure
Please call for reservations: 619.325.8200
Deadline of April 19 (no refunds after that date)**



Amb. Moustapha & member Mildred McAuley



Views From the President

Dr. Ina von Ber

Good morning, Bonjour, Buenos Dias, Guten Tag, Bongiorno, Sabaah el kheer, Jo San, Goedemorgen, Kalimera, Boker tov, Bunā dimineata.

This year has been a busy one so far with many very well-attended and exciting events. We had nearly packed houses at both the Chinese New Year celebration with Consul General Zhong Jianhua of the People's Republic of China and our elegant dinner for the Syrian Ambassador, Dr. Imad Moustapha. He was delighted by the questions posed by our members and assured me he will "come back to San Diego any time we invite him."

It was no April Fool's Day joke when, quite out of the blue came a bequest from the Laurence Springer Trust totaling approximately \$25,000. At our Board of Directors meeting we voted to set this sum aside, using the interest to establish an annual memorial lecture for Laurence Springer, over the years a steadfast supporter and very generous friend of the San Diego World Affairs Council.

When it rains it pours – ALL good things this time! We have been picked up by FOX TV (on a consistent basis) and are also getting press coverage by the Union-Tribune, Rancho Santa Fe News, Del Mar Times and Carmel Valley News. We are also moving full speed ahead into Spring with excellent upcoming programs (see the calendar of events elsewhere in this issue).

I have been traveling quiet a bit lately. When entering stores abroad and passing advertising billboards, I have to smile as many still remind me of great marketing blunders by U.S. companies which ignored cultural sensitivities. They certainly could have used the advise of our knowledgeable members. For example, did you know that:

- An American T-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market, which promoted the Pope's visit. Instead of "I saw the Pope" (el Papa); the shirts read, "I Saw the Potato" (la papa).
- Pepsi's "Come Alive With the Pepsi Generation" translated into "Pepsi Brings Your Ancestors Back From the Grave" in Chinese.
- The Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer Electrolux used the following slogan in an American campaign: "Nothing sucks like an Electrolux."
- Clairol introduced the "Mist Stick," a curling iron, into Germany only to find out that "mist" is slang for manure. Not too many people had use for the "Manure Stick."

I would like to especially thank Lowell and April Blankfort and Tom and Wendy Meyer-Lucas for their generosity: we now have two additional computers – one laptop and the other a desktop – for our office because of them! I would also like to thank you for all your support, patronage, and participation and look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Good-bye, Adieu, Ciao, Adios, Farvel, Vaarwel, À bientôt, Tschüß, Parahi, Larevedere.

Executive Director's Q&A

Mark Maestroni

I can't believe that 6 months have already passed since taking on the job of Executive Director of the San Diego World Affairs Council. Clearly, the old adage "time passes quickly when you're having fun" must be true. For my first **Communiqué** column I thought it might be helpful, and hopefully instructive, to answer some frequently asked questions.

Q. How is the deadline for meal event reservations determined? Why is money non-refundable after that date?

A. It is standard procedure for restaurants to require a "head count" usually 48-72 hours before the event allowing the banqueting staff to plan accordingly. We guarantee payment for this number of meals whether or not that many people are served.

Q. May I show up without a reservation?

A. We discourage members from doing this. First, our room size may be limited and space for you may not be available. At our luncheon at Tom Ham's in January, for example, we were nearly maxed out as many showed up unannounced. Second, there's that pesky guarantee mentioned above. Usually only a handful of extra meals will be available. I encourage everyone to make reservations and please do NOT wait until the last minute.

Q. What happened to the meeting room at the World Trade Center? How do you choose venues?

A. We abandoned the seminar room at the World Trade Center downtown for our non-meal events. There was no air-conditioning after 6 p.m. and members complained of a lack of parking. Members also asked for more easily accessible venues near the freeway system – dark neighborhoods off the beaten track are easy to get lost in at night. The conveniently located International House at UCSD solved many of these problems.

Meal events introduce a host of other variables, namely locating decent food at a modest price. Look for more meal events at Tom Ham's and the Mission Valley Marriott. If you have a favorite restaurant, let me know!

Q. Is there a deadline for renewing memberships?

A. Yes! Memberships become delinquent after 30 days and are purged from our database after 90 days. Please respond in a timely manner as every reminder costs money to mail.

San Diego WAC New Members

Please welcome the following new members who have joined the San Diego World Affairs Council since January 2006.

Abraham Borun III & Dr. Aperna Mital
Gloria Conn
April Deibert
Cauleen Glass
Donald & Eloise Katz
Joseph & Rosalind Lamm
Joseph Luna
Dr. R.L. Mason
Bette Moloney
Patricia Quigley
Katherine Razook
Melanie Stuart
Joseph & Elizabeth Taft
Ed Trimble
Joanna Tsai
Andra Welsh



Prof. Ross Dunn and President Ina von Ber sharing a joke at the Marrakesh Restaurant.

San Diego WAC Contributing Members

The SD World Affairs Council would like to thank its Contributing Members at the Corporate, Ambassador and Consular levels for their generosity and support.

Corporate Member (\$5,000+ Contribution)

Denise Diamond, USD
Dr. Patrick Drinan, USD
Dr. Frank Lazarus, USD
David Shirk, USD
Brandi Taylor, Santa Ysabel Tribal Council

Ambassador Club (\$1000+ Contribution)

Lowell and April Blankfort
James M. and Phyllis Davis
Audrey Geisel
Leonard J. & Barbara Gosink
Don and Charlotte Gragg

Consular Club (\$250-\$499 Contribution)

Joan E. Bowes
Dr. Gerry Burstain
Richard & Vickie Butcher
Ms. Cheryl Fisher, Esq.
Joshua Funk
Chitha Hulugalle
William A. Jordan
Dr. Sanford and Evelyn Lakoff
Barry and Yang Ja Lamont
Wendy Lucas-Meyer
Amb. & Mrs. Richard Matheron
John B. McNeece III
Edward J.G. Mracek
Alfredo Paredes
Richard and Brigitte Phillips
Rudy Ramirez
Alice Reinig & Norman Schoenfeld
RADM Joseph P. Rizza
Kathleen Roche-Tansey
Sam Sampson
Alex V. Sher
Abbe Wolfsheimer Stutz
Irmgard Valenta
Cal & Fran Watson

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Syrian Ambassador, Dr. Imad Moustapha, Speaks to the World Affairs Council

by Adrienne Cady

Ambassador Imad Moustapha's March 1 address to the World Affairs Council provided an interesting and insightful perspective on today's strained US-Syrian relations. Demonstrating his polished speaking style and sense of humor, Amb. Moustapha joked about the difficulties of being the only ambassador in Washington representing a "rogue state" while discussing both misperceptions of Syria in the United States and Syrian opinions on the role of the US in the Middle East.

Ambassador Moustapha emphasized that Syria's disagreement with US policies in the region does not indicate underlying antagonism toward the US. In mentioning Syria's role in the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 and its immediate willingness to establish security contacts with the United States after 9/11, Amb. Moustapha underscored the ability of Syria to maintain a cordial and helpful relationship with the US before the 2001 American invasion of Iraq. He called this period a "short-lived honeymoon," reminiscing upon then-Secretary of State Colin Powell's thanks to Syria "for helping save American lives" through intelligence-sharing regarding terrorist threats.

After the invasion, which Syrians overwhelmingly oppose, tensions between the US and Syria increased dramatically – Syria unequivocally opposes the actions of the US military in Iraq. Amb. Moustapha painted a picture of a US government that ignored Syrian concerns and used its government as a scapegoat, misrepresenting its actions and intentions to the American people. This, in turn, has caused resentment towards the US and a fear of future US intervention in Syria.

Amb. Moustapha, in a significant yet little-heard anecdote, told of an experience of his own regarding the US attitude toward his country. Following the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, the US government publicized claims that the majority of insurgents in Iraq were in fact foreigners entering through the Syrian border. Amb. Moustapha went to the Pentagon on behalf of his government in an attempt to ease allegations of Syrian tolerance of the movement of terrorists across its borders. Though the ambassador offered US officials full Syrian cooperation in any plan to secure the borders, he was met only with silence. Syria, Amb. Moustapha said, then took unilateral action to monitor the borders and document those trying to cross. Tellingly, it later emerged that virtually none of the insurgents captured in Iraq were from outside the country. This revelation, he



claims, raises questions as to what the US government is telling its citizens about Syria.

Amb. Moustapha devoted much of his time to explaining the positions of the Syrian government that, he says, the US condemns through basic misunderstanding. For Syria, the US invasion of Iraq is a matter of grave concern. Though Syria had little to say for Saddam Hussein's regime, it opposed the use of force to remove it, believing that such a course would only cause violence and suffering. Additionally, Syria considered that a US presence would stir strident anti-Americanism and extremism throughout the region. Amb. Moustapha alleged that the opening of a "Pandora's box of ills and evils" – instability, resentment, violence and sectarianism – since the invasion has justified these fears. He spoke of the fear of a civil war in Iraq and the regional repercussions such a conflict would have.

Ambassador Moustapha made a brief, sugar-coated reference to Syrian problems with Lebanon noting that the Syrian Army had brought an end to internal strife. However, he failed to note that Syria did not end its occupation until forced to by strong national Lebanese reaction after the Hariri assassination.

Amb. Moustapha concluded his address with his hopes for a future improvement in US-Syrian relations. To this end, he outlined Syria's perspective on the involvement of the US in the Middle East. Amb. Moustapha called for a positive role for the US as an "honest broker of peace" rather than a military force in the region. While Syria believes the US should assuage Iraqi fears of a prolonged occupation and devise a clear exit strategy, it welcomes US involvement in a different capacity, namely as a peacemaker. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as the relationship between Syria and Israel, Amb. Moustapha calls upon the US to resume its role as a neutral negotiator for peace.

French Ambassador to Speak to Members in May

Since September 11, 2001 and the beginning of U.S. involvement first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq, the positions of France have been of concern to the United States. Though it is a historical ally of the United States, the French government and the vast majority of the French people have condemned U.S. actions. A lack of positive communication in recent years and strong differences of opinion have led to a weakening relationship between France and the United States.

In recent weeks, moreover, France has experienced internal turmoil over widespread nationwide strikes against a new labor law

Both in its internal affairs and in its relations with the United States, the rest of Europe, and the wider world, France could be facing a period of transition and perhaps seminal change. On Friday, May 5, 2006, the World Affairs Council will host the French Ambassador to the United States for a dialogue on the current situation in France, recent French-American relations, and France's

place in the European Community and the world.

His Excellency Jean-David Levitte has been the French Ambassador to the United States since the end of 2002. Born in 1946 in the South of France, he has a law degree and is a graduate of Sciences-Po, the National Institute for Political Science, and of the National School of Oriental Languages, where he studied Chinese and Indonesian. Ambassador Levitte has served in the administrations of two French Presidents, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Jacques Chirac, and has occupied a number of senior positions in the French Foreign Service, including France's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2000 to 2002.

Friday, May 5, 2006

**Check-in 6:30 p.m., Dinner 7:00 p.m.
Marriott San Diego Mission Valley Hotel
8757 Rio San Diego Drive**

**Members \$40, Non-Members \$45
Self-parking charge \$6 for the evening
Please call for reservations: 619.325.8200
Deadline of May 2 (no refunds after that date)**

Calendar of Events

San Diego World Affairs Council Events

(Reservations are required for all San Diego World Affairs Council events. Please call 619.325.8200)

Thursday, April 20: Deputy Asst. Secretary of State, Gordon Gray, and UCSD Prof. Babak Rahimi, "Are Iran's Nuclear Ambitions a Threat to World Security?" (Luncheon & panel discussion, Tom Ham's Lighthouse Restaurant, 2150 Harbor Island Drive, San Diego; Check-in 11:30 a.m., Lunch Noon; Members \$29, Non-Members \$34)

Sunday, April 23: WorldQuest 2006 trivia contest, silent auction and luncheon. (International House, UCSD Campus in La Jolla, Check-in & silent auction at Noon, Lunch at 12:30, competition begins at 1:00 p.m.; \$50 per person, \$400 for tables of eight)

Friday, May 5: French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte. (Dinner and talk, Marriott San Diego Mission Valley, check-in 6:30 p.m., dinner 7:00 p.m.; Members \$40, Non-Members \$45)

Thursday, May 18: Brig. Gen. David Custer, U.S. Central Command (details to be announced)

Wednesday, May 24: Author, Milton Viorst, "Storm From the East" (Flashpoints Event, International House, UCSD Campus, check-in 6:30 p.m., presentation 7:00 p.m.; Members \$15, Non-Members \$20)

North County (All programs are free unless otherwise noted)

April 11: Dr. Michael Turner, "TURKEY" (Rancho Bernardo Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Drive, 7.00 p.m. refreshments, 7.30 p.m. program)

Thursday Morning Meetings: 10.00 a.m. at the Remington Club, Phase II, 16916 Hierba Drive, Rancho Bernardo; park across street near Vons, Bernardo Plaza

April 13: Professor James Cooper, California Western School of Law; "The Challenges for Continued U.S. Influence in Latin America".

April 20: Mr. Leon Bloom, member, will discuss Jared Diamond's book in his talk entitled "Collapse, Another View".

April 24: Ms Anne Hoiberg, Director, "WAC Mission to Tunisia". (La Vida Del Mar, 850 Del Mar Downs Road, Solana Beach, 10:05 a.m.)

April 27: Mr. Jerry Tetalman, President, Citizens for Global Solutions of San Diego, will present his book "One World Democracy: A Progressive Vision for Enforceable Global Law".

May 4: Ms Anne Hoiberg, Director UNA, SDWAC and American Association of University Women will speak on the "WAC Mission to Tunisia".

May 9: Professor Jeffrey Vincent, UCSD/IRPS; "Depletion of World's Forests & their Resources" (Rancho Bernardo Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Drive, 7.00 p.m. refreshments, 7.30 p.m.)

May 11: Prof. Mykhailo Alexseev, SDSU, "An Update on Ukraine"

May 18: Prof. Cyrus Masroori, Dept. of Political Science, Cal State San Marcos; "Obstacles to Political Reform in Iran".

May 25: Prof. Paul Dayton, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, UCSD; "Human Activities Impact on Marine Ecosystems".

June 1: Jim Stewart, Professor Emeritus, Sonoma University; "Lester Brown's 'Plan 2.0: A Way to Avoid Collapse'".

June 8: WAC-NC Annual Meeting & Luncheon, Bernardo Heights Country Club; Dr. Farouk Al-Nasser, "Iran's Influence in Iraq". (Rancho Bernardo Swim & Tennis Club, 16955 Bernardo Oaks Dr., 11:30 a.m.)