



Media Note

Office of the Spokesman

Washington, DC

January 11, 2007

Business Leaders Make Major Commitment To Support American Public Diplomacy

At the Private Sector Summit on Public Diplomacy at the U.S. Department of State on Wednesday, January 10, 2007, 150 top public relations professionals and State Department leaders identified 11 action steps for greater private sector involvement and support for U.S. public diplomacy. The Summit was co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen P. Hughes, Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina H. Powell and the Public Relations Coalition. The Public Relations Coalition, chaired by James E. Murphy, represents U. S. based professional organizations with over 50,000 members engaged in public relations, public affairs and related fields.

The presentation of private sector best practices was followed by intense group discussions during which the Summit participants identified actions that would have the greatest impact on private sector public diplomacy efforts. These include:

Developing business practices making public diplomacy a core element of international corporate public action:

- Name a corporate officer responsible for public diplomacy;
- Incorporate U.S. business practices consistent with U.S. values of respect for the individual, opportunities and entrepreneurship.

Promoting understanding of American society, culture and values:

- become part of the local community through employee volunteerism, strategic philanthropy, and greater engagement with responsible NGOs;
- create "circles" of influence through relationships with organizations, chambers of commerce, journalists, and local business leaders;
- create local opportunities to win internship opportunities in the U.S.;
- provide English-language training and overseas studies for disadvantaged students.

Building relationships of trust and respect:

- support the creation of a corps of private sector "foreign service officers" made up of academics and business people with specialized expertise who could work abroad on short term assignments;
- provide incentives for non-U.S. workforce to visit U.S. and for U.S. work force to travel overseas;
- sponsor international short-term assignments for U.S. employees;
- have private sector public diplomacy summits in key geographies;
- provide financial support for some State Department educational and cultural exchanges.

The key recommended actions will be published as part of a Public Relations Coalition report on the Summit. It will include other actions that the private sector can adopt in its continuing effort to improve public diplomacy.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/78646.htm>