



CIVIC

Council for International Visitors

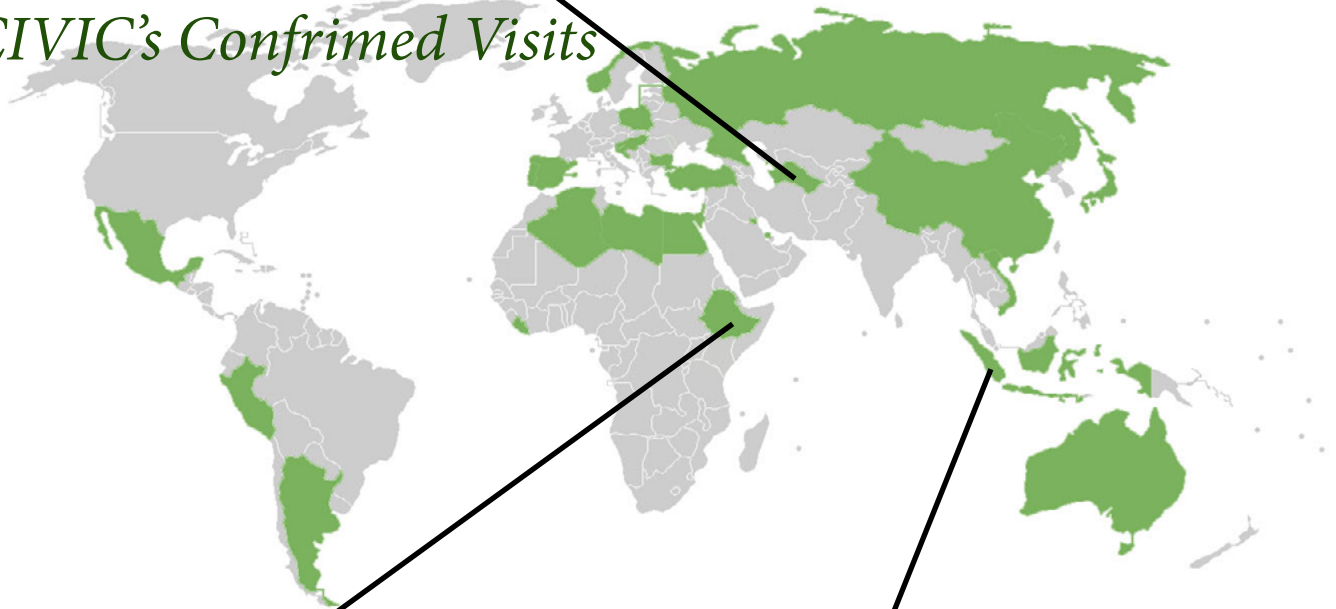


Turkmenistan

In Iowa City May 2

- Agriculture in Turkmenistan is a significant sector of the economy which contributes 20.9% of the GDP and employs 48.2% of the work-force.
- Turkmenistan plans to seek foreign investment to help finance a \$1 billion expansion programme of its cotton industry up until 2016
- Turkmenistan is home to the Door to Hell in the Karakum desert
- Karakum Canal is one of the longest irrigation canals in the world.
- Turkmenistan ranks 5th in the world in terms of GDP growth rate.

CIVIC's Confirmed Visits



so far in 2013

- Ethiopia ranks 89th in the world on education expenditure- 4.7% GDP
- Over 57% of the adult population (above the age of 15) is illiterate
- On average, Ethiopians complete eight years of formal education
- In the past decade the number of institutions of higher education in Ethiopia has jumped from only two to more than twenty.

Ethiopia
In Iowa City April 17



Indonesia
In Iowa City May 24

- Indonesia ranks 141st in the world on education expenditure- 3% GDP
- There are approximately 742 different languages and dialects spoken in Indonesia.
- Indonesia is made up of over 17,000 different islands.
- Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world with over 90% of the population adhering to Islam.
- A tsunami in December of 2004 resulted in the deaths of over 150,000 Indonesians



Council for International Visitors

Benghazi calling

In January, CIVIC's visitors left a country in still reeling from Qaddafi's downfall, with chaos in the streets and insecurity in the media. What's happened in Libya in the last four months?

John Mahoney

When Colonel Muammar Qaddafi was captured and killed while trying to escape his hometown of Sirte on October 10th 2011, the world breathed a sigh of relief. Two days later, Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC) officially declared the civil war, which had lasted for over eight months and had left over 25,000 Libyans dead, officially over. However, as the streets filled with Libyans celebrating their freedom from decades of authoritarian rule, many realized that this was only the beginning of Libya's long path to democracy.

Since the end of the war Libya has taken great strides towards democracy. In early 2012 the NTC laid the groundwork for Libya's new constitution, and in the summer of 2012 elections for Libya's new government were held. However, no transition from authoritarianism to democracy takes place smoothly and Libya has been no exception from the rule. Militias which sprouted up across the country during the civil war have not put down their weapons. Qaddafi loyalists, based in the western town of Bani Walid continue to attack and kidnap Libyans in the city of Misrata. Ethnic tensions between Arab Libyans, Berber Libyans and African Libyans have led to outbreaks of violence across the country. And of course, this past September we were reminded that radical Islamist groups can never be overlooked in this part of the world, when US Ambassador Christopher Stevens was killed in an attack on the US Diplomatic Mission in Benghazi carried out by militias armed with RPGs, mortars, hand grenades and mounted machine guns.

During the course of the past two years the Libyan people have risen up, they have let their voices be heard, they have overthrown a brutal and longstanding authoritarian leader and have begun the process towards creating a sustainable democracy. However, we must understand that this process is both long and complex, and that the struggle of the Libyan people cannot be forgotten simply because it no longer makes headline news on a daily basis across our country's cable news networks.

Iowa City's visitors back on the beat in Libya.

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Upcoming CIVIC Visits

April 17-21: *Ethiopia* – University Administration

May 2-8: *Turkmenistan* – Food security

May 22-25: *Algeria, Mongolia* - Emergency Medicine

June 10-28: *West Bank, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Yemen, Kuwait, Algeria, Israel, Gaza, Tunisia, Egypt, Qatar, Tunisia, Algeria, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan* - Small Business

June 23-27: *Vietnam, Turkey, China, Spain, Singapore, Russia, Portugal, Peru, Nepal, Mexico, Liberia, Kuwait, Japan, Israel, Egypt, Croatia, Bulgaria, Bahrain, Australia, Argentina* - US Foreign policy

CIVIC Always needs volunteers for our visits. If you're interested in driving, feeding, hosting, or just meeting our guests, get in touch with us! Citizens are the most important part of citizen diplomacy.

CIVIC
1120 UCC
(319)-335-0351
civic@uiowa.edu



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Sequestration!

Budget sequestration in Washington threatens citizen diplomacy across the nation, and around the world. As politicians look for programs to cut across the federal budget, IVLP programs have come under threat - we who know firsthand the importance of these programs need to speak up and ensure they are protected.

Dear Friends of CIVIC:

The House and Senate budget resolutions concerning foreign aid and international exchanges look very different.

House Budget Committee Chair Rep. Paul Ryan has put forward a budget proposal that would cut an additional 7% from the international affairs budget. Moreover, the House Budget Committee is specifically targeting exchanges, asserting that exchange programs, while laudable, are "non-essential activities." The Senate's budget proposal, in stark contrast, calls for spending 18% more on foreign affairs than the House proposal. The Senate's figure would represent an increase of 9.6% from current, post-sequester funding levels. In addition, Senator Rand Paul (KY) has proposed two amendments to the FY 2014 budget that would damage foreign affairs and global engagement. Paul amendment #382 would cut foreign assistance (it is unclear what programs would be effected) to pay for domestic infrastructure projects; and Paul amendment #381 would withdraw the U.S. from the United Nations. For more detailed information and resources visit NCIV online: <http://nciv.org/Advocacy/advocacy-tools-a-resources.html>

As valued members of CIVIC, we need to get fired up and motivated to send emails, make calls, and write letters to our members of Congress. The members of the House and Senate Appropriations Sub-committee on State and Foreign Ops are of course a priority.

Please let our congressional representatives say no to such budget cuts, and to remind them how valuable the foreign exchanges have been to Iowa and most importantly, to citizen diplomacy. **Tom Harkin** has been very supportive of our work in the past, so please write to his staff, [Rosemary Gutierrez@harkin.senate.gov](mailto:Rosemary.Gutiérrez@harkin.senate.gov). **Senator Grassley** is another who would benefit from a call to support our program! He has historically brought agriculture attaches from the foreign embassies to Iowa and we want him to continue to support us, and not cut funding. Please write to Kurt Kovarik, a key member of the Senator's staff at kurt_kovarik@grassley.senate.gov.

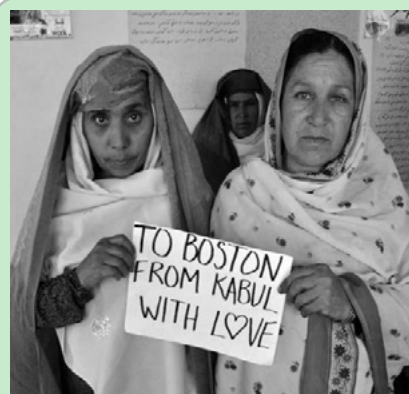
We thank you wholeheartedly for your support. We can't continue to do the valuable work we do without backing from Congress; please take five minutes out of your day to write to your representative. The difference you make will mean everything to us.

Sincerely,

Robyn Braverman,

Executive Director

Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities



Never underestimate the power of citizen diplomacy. Our hearts go out to the people of Boston.

Support CIVIC!

Become a member today!

New Member Information

Membership

Household

Student - \$10

Sustaining Member - \$50-

Individual - \$35

Patron - \$200-499

Household - \$55

Diplomat - \$500+

Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code