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INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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## Washington worried by tumult of Arab Spring

BY STEVEN LEE MYERS  
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — While the popular uprisings of the Arab Spring created new opportunities for U.S. diplomacy, the tumult has also presented the United States with challenges — and worst-case scenarios — that would have once been almost unimaginable.

What if the Palestinians' quest for recognition of a state at the United Nations, despite U.S. pleas otherwise, lands Israel in the International Criminal Court, fuels deeper resentment of the United States, or touches off a new convulsion of violence in the West Bank and Gaza?

Or if Egypt, emerging from decades of autocratic rule under President Hosni Mubarak, responds to anti-Israeli sentiments on the street and abrogates the Camp David peace treaty, a bulwark of Arab-Israeli stability for three decades?

"We're facing an Arab awakening that nobody could have imagined and few predicted just a few years ago," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in a recent interview with reporters and editors of The New York Times. "And it's sweeping aside a lot of the old preconceptions."

It may also sweep aside, or at least diminish, U.S. influence in the region. The bold vow on Friday by Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas to seek full membership at the United Nations amounted to a public rebuff of weeks of feverish U.S. diplomacy, which continued through the weekend.

It came on top of a rapid and worrisome deterioration of relations between Egypt and Israel and between Israel and Turkey, the three countries that have been the strongest U.S. allies in the region and the bedrock of U.S. diplomacy for the last three decades.

Diplomacy has never been easy in the Middle East, but the recent events have so roiled the region that the United States fears being forced to take sides in diplomatic or, worse, military disputes among its friends.

• TURN TO ARAB SPRING, 2A

## Obama rolls out 'balanced' plan to cut debt by \$3T

BY HELENE COOPER  
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Barack Obama called on Monday for Congress to adopt his "balanced" plan combining entitlement cuts, tax increases and war savings to reduce the federal deficit by more than \$3 trillion over the next 10 years, and said he would veto any approach that relied solely on spending reductions to address the fiscal shortfall.

"I will not support any plan that puts all the burden for closing our

deficit on ordinary Americans," he said. "And I will veto any bill that changes benefits for those who rely on Medicare but does not raise serious revenues by asking the wealthiest Americans and biggest corporations to pay their fair share."

"We are not going to have a one-sided deal that hurts the folks who are most vulnerable," he continued.

His plan, presented in a speech in the Rose Garden of the White House, is the administration's latest move in the long-running power struggle over deficit reduction.

It comes as a joint House-Senate committee begins work in earnest to spell out, at the least, a more modest savings plan that Congress could approve by the end of the year in keeping with the debt deal reached this summer. If the committee's proposal is not enacted by Dec. 23, draconian automatic cuts across government agencies could take effect a year later.

Obama is seeking \$1.5 trillion in tax increases, primarily on the wealthy and corporations, through a combination of letting Bush-era

income tax cuts expire on wealthier taxpayers, limiting the value of deductions taken by high earners and closing corporate loopholes. The proposal also includes \$580 billion in adjustments to health and entitlement programs, including \$248 billion to Medicare and \$72 billion to Medicaid. In a briefing previewing the plan, administration officials said Sunday that the Medicare savings would not come from an increase in the Medicare eligibility age.

• TURN TO DEFICIT PLAN, 2A

## AT HUGE MOSQUE, NUMBERS DWINDLE

A once-thriving Lebanese community in Colombia is struggling for survival



MAURICIO MORENO/EL TIEMPO

Muslims in Maicao, Colombia, pray at the Omar Ibn al Jattab mosque. The Lebanese community has been leaving the town due to violence and a changing economic landscape.

BY JIM WYSS  
jwyss@miamiherald.com

MAICAO, Colombia — Religious holidays have always been an occasion to measure the strength of the Lebanese community in this sweltering border town. On a recent Friday, during the waning days of Ramadan, worshippers barely filled three rows of the mosque as their Egyptian imam led them in prayer.

"Less than a decade ago, we could fill up nine rows easily," said Hassan Jomaa, as he translated the

Arabic sermon at the back of the massive hall. "There were times where this room was so full that people had to pray outside."

Lebanese immigrants have called Colombia home since at least the 19th century. And while Maicao is not the largest such community, it's one of the most vibrant.

The bustling commercial town of about 150,000 people doesn't have a movie theater but supports eight Arabic television stations; Middle Eastern delicacies such as kibbeh and shawarma compete

with Colombian arepas and bunuelos in food stalls; and posters of Lebanese soccer stars share walls with portraits of Che Guevara and other Latin American icons.

Rising above a sea of vendors hawking textiles and trinkets is the minaret of the Omar Ibn al Jattab mosque — the cultural cornerstone of the community. Built in 1997, the mosque has a 1,476 square-foot prayer room that can easily fit 700 men. The women pray in another area of the building. It's thought to be the third-largest mosque in

Latin America — after structures in Argentina and Venezuela. But unlike those institutions, built with Arab funds, Maicao's mosque was financed by the local community, Jomaa said.

But it has been years since the prayer hall was full. During the last decade, about half the community has left, leaving 800 to 1,000 Arabs in Maicao, said Nedal Serhan, the president of the Islamic Benevolent Association.

• TURN TO COLOMBIA, 4A

## Drug lords' pets strain Mexico's zoos

BY MANUEL VALDES  
Associated Press

TOLUCA, Mexico — The three tiny squirrel monkeys led a life of luxury on a 16-acre ranch, surrounded by extravagant gardens and barns built for purebred horses.

More than 200 animals, ranging from mules to peacocks and ostriches, lived on the ranch in central Mexico and hundreds more stayed on two related properties, many in opulent enclosures. Also on the grounds were less furry

fare: AK-47 assault rifles, Berrettas, hundreds of other weapons and cocaine.

The ranch's owner was Jesus "The King" Zambada, a leader of the powerful Sinaloa drug cartel. He had developed a love for exotic species shared with other kingpins. Just two days before Zambada's arrest, police confiscated two tigers and two lions from a drug gang hideout on the forested outskirts of Mexico City.

As federal authorities capture a growing number of gang leaders, many of their pets are being driven from their gilded cages into more modest housing in the country's zoos.

That's proved overwhelming for some institutions, which are struggling to cope with the influx. But it's also giving Mexican animal lovers a bounty of new creatures to admire.

Like Zambada, who was apprehended in October 2008, the squirrel monkeys sit in state custody, chirping away at gawking children at the Zacango Zoo, about an hour outside Mexico City.

Their previous home "was a very big enclosure made of good

• TURN TO PETS, 2A



ARNULFO FRANCO/AP

A squirrel monkey peers through its cage at a zoo that houses animals captured from drug traffickers, in Zacango, Mexico.

## NASA satellite expected to hit Earth this week

BY JOEL ACHENBACH  
Washington Post Service

The sky is not falling. A 12,500-pound NASA satellite the size of a school bus is, however.

It's the Upper Atmosphere Research Satellite, or UARS — YOU-ARZ — and it's currently tumbling in orbit and succumbing to Earth's gravity. It will crash to the surface Friday.

Or maybe Thursday. Or Saturday.

Out-of-control crashing satellites don't lend themselves to exact estimates even for the precision-minded folks at NASA. The uncertainty about the "when" makes the "where" all the trickier, because a small change in the timing of the re-entry translates into thousands of miles of difference in the crash site.

As of the moment, NASA says the 35-foot-long satellite will crash somewhere between 57 degrees north latitude and 57 degrees south latitude — a projected crash zone that covers most of the planet, and particularly the inhabited parts. In this hemisphere, that includes everyone living between north-

ern Newfoundland and the frigid ocean beyond the last point of land in South America.

Polar bears and Antarctic scientists are safe.

It's the biggest piece of NASA space junk to fall to Earth in more than 30 years. It should create a light show. The satellite will partially burn up during re-entry, and, by NASA's calculation, break into about 100 pieces, creating fireballs that should be visible even in daytime.

An estimated 26 of those pieces will survive the re-entry burn and will spray themselves in a linear debris field 500 miles long. The largest chunk should weigh about 300 pounds.

As the Friday-ish crash gets closer, NASA will refine its estimate of timing and location, but the fudge factor will remain high.

"There are too many variations on solar activity which affect the atmosphere, the drag on the vehicle," said Nicholas Johnson, chief scientist for orbital debris at NASA.

• TURN TO NASA, 2A

U.K. POLICE ARREST  
7 IN ANTI-TERROR  
OPERATION, 6A

GREECE TALKS WITH  
CREDITORS DRAG ON,  
BUSINESS FRONT

FALCONS BEAT EAGLES,  
AS VICK GETS INJURED,  
SPORTS FRONT

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## ECUADOR NEWS - MADE IN ECUADOR

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# Reconnecting cocoa



**CYRIL PRUDHOMME** says the opening of Cyril Boutique, in Quito, takes chocolate to a new level, offering art and culture through gastronomy.

www.cyrilprudhomme.com

BY LANCE BASHEAR  
LBASHEAR@HOY.COM.EC

The "Manual de la Cocinera," a cookbook published in Quito in the 1800s, offers one recipe for chocolate: an ice cream, under the section of "Helados Franceses," or French ice cream.

It may seem ironic that a French recipe for chocolate would end up in a local, Ecuadorian cookbook when the raw material for chocolate – the cocoa bean – is found naturally in Ecuador, not France. But this book, which was re-published last year by the city of Quito, offering a testament to the cooking techniques of the time, illustrates a reality that had already developed between the final product, chocolate, and its raw material, cocoa.

It is a reality that still persists today, but in recent years, Ecuador – the world's greatest producer of fine or flavor chocolate beans – has worked hard to re-establish the link between cocoa and chocolate and gain recognition denied it for so very long.



Pacari Chocolate

**A CHOCOLATE REPUBLIC** in recent years Ecuador, known for producing some of the world's greatest cocoa beans, has made strides in producing some of the world's greatest chocolate.

### THE CHANGING CHOCOLATE SCENE

Author and chocolate expert Maricel Presilla, who visited Ecuador earlier this year, says that, "Ninety percent of the history of chocolate is the history of a drink." More specifically, she says that before 1800 most recipes for chocolate were in liquid form. And though the popularity of solid chocolate desserts would surpass drinks in the 20th century, recipes would continue to characterize chocolate in one of two ways: unsweetened and semi-sweet.

But as a sign of the times, today we commonly find recipes such as the chocolate fudge cake in the "1001 Foods to Die For," (McMeel Publishing), which lists as its chocolate ingredient: "bitter sweet chocolate, minimum 70% cocoa solids."

And if you read Presilla's book, "The New Taste of Chocolate (Revised) A Cultural and Natural History of Cacao with Recipes," she offers her recipe for Deep Chocolate Torte using dark chocolate: "preferably El Rey Bucare (58.5% cacao), Callebaut (56% cacao), or Cacao Barry Equateur (60% cacao), finely chopped."

The use and understanding of chocolate has become more sophisticated in recent years thanks, in part, to Presilla, herself.

Presilla's family tree is rooted in cocoa. Her grandparents grew cocoa on the eastern tip of Cuba. When she was young she relocated to the United States. In the 1980s Presilla was hired by El Rey Chocolates to help re-establish a connection in the food community between cocoa beans and chocolate.

"What they wanted was to conquer the markets through chefs and food writers...I traveled all over Venezuela by plane with the owners of the company. We invited chefs from all over the U.S. to come."

She says that all of the great chefs of the time knew nothing about cocoa. "They didn't understand why the flavor was the way it was. They didn't make the relationship between cocoa and the flavor."



Dirección Turismo Guayaquil

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF COCOA

In her book, Presilla says that cocoa dealers from the earliest times, the Aztecs and the Mayans, understood the nuances of cocoa and often identified beans by the region from which they came. The quality of the bean could be tasted in the final product, the chocolate, to which spices were always added for flavor.

After the Spanish discovery of cocoa in the 16th century, chocolate soon became an aristocratic drink in European society. In the 19th century it became industrialized. Spices were abandoned, milk and sugar were added, and – like a child who thinks milk comes from the supermarket rather than the cow – chocolate became something whose origins were generally nebulous.

### REPUBLIC OF COCOA

Presilla worked to break down the barriers between chocolate and cocoa with a special kind of bean. She used "criollo" cocoa, a chocolate genetically identified as a "fine or flavor," bean.

The term fine or flavor is used by the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) to distinguish from bulk beans, varieties that have a chocolate flavor, but lack certain properties, or tasting notes, found in fine or flavor beans.

Flavor beans represent a very small percentage of world cacao production – only five percent – but the majority of those beans, 60 to 70 percent, are grown in Ecuador.

Ecuador, though, is still principally an exporter of raw material. Antonio Orozco, economist with the National Association of Cacao Exporters in Ecuador estimates that only about three percent of the total production of cacao actually remains in Ecuador for the production of chocolate. Last year, Ecuador exported an estimated 137,000 metric tons of cacao valued at more than \$401 million.

Ecuadorian cocoa is commonly known (and genetically classified) as "nacional," or national cocoa. It is often referred to as "cacao arriba," (arriba means 'up' in Spanish), a name derived from the location of its discovery centuries ago, "up river," from the coastal port city of Guayaquil, along the Guayas River in the area of present day Manabi and Los Rios Provinces.

Lourdes Delgado, cocoa expert and producer of the Chchukululu Chocolate brand in Ecuador says arriba cocoa is described as having a floral and fruity



Courtesy Salon de Chocolate

**SALON DE CHOCOLATE** Earlier this year the French Chamber of Commerce in Ecuador, along with local sponsors, hosted the Salon de Chocolate, a local, chocolate trade show.

fragrance and taste – distinguishable from cocoa grown in other places. "[Arriba] starts with something special – special conditions to grow cocoa. As a result we have a special product."

Leonor Zambrano, who works for the NGO, Conservacion y Desarrollo, talks of the "terroir" of chocolate, a French word that refers to the characteristics of a certain geographical place that bestow particular qualities upon chocolate, much like the terroir of wine, tea, or coffee.

Conservacion y Desarrollo recently sponsored the first "Aromas and Flavors of Chocolate of Ecuador," Fair with 11 cocoa growers associations at the National Agriculture Research Institute's (INIAP) Pichilingue Experimental Station, near Quevedo, Ecuador. The organization is empowering growers who already produce great cocoa beans, to take their product and knowledge further.

Alfredo Dueñas, also with Conservacion y Desarrollos, says, "The market for Ecuadorian cacao is not the real problem [for the growers]. Every single bean is sold already. So what we are trying to find is better markets, better options." This includes the creation of chocolate bars to market the flavors, which are particular to each association, using symbolic packaging that lends identity to their final product.

### A NEW CHOCOLATE REPUBLIC

What Conservacion y Desarrollo are showing is that countries like Ecuador, with their fine cocoa, are the reason countries like France have historically produced great chocolate. But today the line between cocoa and chocolate producers is blurring.

Earlier this year the French Chamber of Commerce, in cooperation with organizations like the Programa de Desarrollo Economico Local (Prodel – a division of USAID), and local producers, hosted the "Salon de Chocolate," a local, chocolate trade show, taking its lead from the French "Salon du Chocolat," an international chocolate show held annually in France.

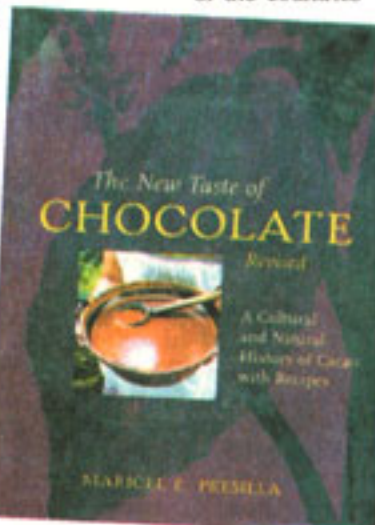
Edgar Leon, one of the event's coordinators in Quito says, "The Salon de Chocolate has been organized because Ecuador is one of the countries

greatest halls of influence.

Drop by, unannounced, to the office of Santiago Peralta, founder of Pacari Chocolate, and you find scattered among the office clutter, raw cocoa beans and samples of different cocoa powders. Peralta is wired and excited, perhaps because he is continually sampling the product he loves, or maybe because his passion is to produce it like nobody else ever has.

From their beginnings less than ten years ago, Pacari has built a brand that competes with the best chocolates found worldwide. He quickly turns to his computer to show me the website www.seventypercent.com, developed by famed, chocolate critic Martin Christy. He scrolls down to the top dark bar evaluations, where Pacari Raw Chocolate 70% is currently in third place, sandwiched between the products from the Italian brand Domori and the French, Valrhona.

Peralta has helped to re-connect cocoa and chocolate, in part, with the help of the Danish government who, in 2009, sponsored a book about Pacari, to help showcase in Denmark the origins of chocolate. Called "Raw Chocolate, Naked Passion," the book



with the greatest quality of cocoa in the world and recently many producers of Ecuadorian chocolate are positioning their product as one of the best in the world."

Mauricio Freire, general manager for Hoja Verde, a producer and exporter of fine chocolate, put it succinctly: "We want to convert from being a Republic of Cocoa to a Republic of Chocolate. We have this capacity and quality."

Other producers have made inroads, not only into foreign markets, but into the industry's

removes some of the mystery about chocolate and presents cocoa for what it is: an agricultural product.

Peralta talks about the book with pride: "What we wanted to show is Ecuador...how the people live from cocoa...not the chocolate that is sensual and all that, but the worker sweating...to show the reality that is behind the chocolate."

And like Presilla, Peralta, too, saw a detachment between cocoa and chocolate, but not in the kitchen; he witnessed it in the fields among the growers in coastal, Esmeraldas Province. "When we went for the first time [to Esmeraldas] they saw chocolate for the first time in their lives...people that for four or five generations have produced cocoa, but never had eaten chocolate...they knew about it, but had never tried chocolate."

### THE FRENCH CONNECTION REMAINS

Across from the Pacari stand at the Salon de Chocolate was someone whose presence perhaps more than any other, speaks to the ongoing transformation of the chocolate culture in Ecuador.

Cyril Prudhomme is a French pastry chef who came to Ecuador five years ago as an instructor in gastronomy at San Francisco University and worked as head chef at the Ambrosia chocolate and pastry shop near campus. This week he is celebrating the grand opening of Cyril Boutique, a new chocolate and pastry shop in Quito.

"This is something new in Ecuador...at a high level and totally French," he says. "In France there exists an art for pastry, for a lot of things...we do not go to the pastry shop just to purchase a cake. It has to have a golden base, a nice box, with ribbon. It is a completely different culture with respect to gastronomy."

In Prudhomme's shop customers find chocolate bread, chocolate gelatin, chocolate mousse, Bavarian chocolate with milk and orange, and chocolate ganache, among many other delicacies.

"In France there is a respect for gastronomy that is more important than anything else," Prudhomme insists. "Essentially, we offer art and culture through gastronomy."

So now, 150 years after the publication of "Manual de la Cocinera," it is not surprising that a French pastry chef can be found in Ecuador making local chocolates.



### SOME ECUADORIAN CHOCOLATE MAKERS

- Pacari, [www.pacari.chocolate.com](http://www.pacari.chocolate.com)
- Hoja Verde, [www.hojaverdedarkchocolate.com](http://www.hojaverdedarkchocolate.com)
- Republica de Cacao, [www.republicadelcacao.com](http://www.republicadelcacao.com)
- Fino de Aroma, [www.galeriaecuator.com](http://www.galeriaecuator.com)

