



THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE FOUNDATION PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

World Food Prize President Honored at Intelligence Community Ceremony

Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn was at a ceremony at CIA Headquarters in the Washington DC suburbs September 6, for his role in leading the U.S. Embassy Team in Cambodia from 1998-1999, a period beset with violence.

Quinn, currently the President of the World Food Prize Foundation, accepted the National Intelligence Meritorious Unit Citation for the reporting and analytical work he and his team at the American Embassy in Cambodia did during this period, including tracking and assisting in the capture of the senior members of the Khmer Rouge terrorist organization, which had killed 2 million people over the past several decades.

Other units honored at the ceremony hosted by George Tenet, the Director of Central Intelligence, included the U.S. government officials who had: countered the espionage efforts of convicted FBI agent Robert Hanssen; provided analytical support during the U.S.-China confrontation over the downed U.S. EP-3 reconnaissance plane in 2001; and assessed Israeli-Palestinian violence in the Middle East.

During the period for which he and his embassy were honored, Ambassador Quinn coordinated the U.S. efforts to assist the Cambodian government in capturing the last remaining Khmer Rouge leaders in Cambodia. The approach Ambassador Quinn utilized to undermine and ultimately destroy the Khmer Rouge was recently highlighted by National Academy of Sciences President Bruce Alberts. In his annual address at the National Academy, Dr. Alberts noted that Ambassador Quinn's strategy of constructing rural farm roads and introducing new agricultural technologies in Khmer Rouge strongholds, had uplifted the people in those areas to whom the terrorists had looked for support. This increase in living standards had turned people away from supporting the Khmer Rouge, thus weakening the organization in a way that hundreds of thousands of military forces could not.

As a result, between 1990 and when Ambassador Quinn first introduced this concept into U.S. assistance programs in Cambodia, until 1999 when the Ambassador left, the Khmer

Rouge organization was reduced from over 25,000 fighters to zero, marking one of the few, if not the only time, the U.S. has succeeded in completely destroying a terrorist organization.

Ambassador Quinn said he was inspired in this approach to countering terrorism by the successes of Dr. Norman E. Borlaug's Green Revolution which he first observed while serving as an advisor in the Mekong Delta in the 1960s. The Ambassador related that he saw first-hand the direct connection between poverty and support for terrorism. Most importantly, he said he learned that the building of rural roads and introduction of new seeds and technology could impact terrorist groups in a way that bombs and conventional military forces could not.

Ambassador Quinn has been recognized on several other occasions for his exceptional achievements during his 32-year Foreign Service career. Included are:

- a 1997 special commendation by the Secret Service for his role in directing the capture of a Japan Red Army terrorist who was engaged in counterfeiting U.S. currency;
- praise from former Secretary of State Madeline Albright in 1998 for Ambassador Quinn's and his embassy's work to respond to external threats and promote human rights in Cambodia, including shielding a threatened human rights activist for almost two months;
- a commendation from the State Department in 1983 for being the only U.S. official able to pass undetected through Syrian and warlord controlled checkpoints and gain entry to PLO controlled areas of Lebanon, in order to report on Yassir Arafat's military preparations and operations;
- a 1978 Justice Department Citation for his role in apprehending and prosecuting two individuals who were convicted of espionage against the U.S.; and
- a statement by historian Douglas Brinkley, who writing in *TIME Magazine* in April 2000, said that within the U.S. government, Dr. Quinn had provided the most accurate predictions about the imminent fall of Saigon to the White House and the National Security Council in April, 1975.

At his retirement in 1999, Ambassador Quinn was presented the Secretary of State's Award for Heroism and Valor for his efforts to protect American citizens exposed to civil war in Cambodia, as well as for four lifesaving rescues in which he participated in Vietnam during the war.

Ambassador Quinn has brought his considerable background in dealing with terrorism to his work at the World Food Prize. Six months prior to September 11, he added bioterrorism to the agenda of the 2001 World Food Prize International Symposium. As a result, in the immediate aftermath of the tragic attacks on New York and Washington, the World Food Prize had the first and most focused conference anywhere in the world on the dangers posed to America's food supply from a possible terrorist incident.

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