



**Embassy of the United States of America  
Beirut, Lebanon**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**April 29, 2002**

**Under The Patronage Of Both The Ministers Of Education And  
Higher Education And Environment, And The American Ambassador  
Workshop On "Technology And Environment In The Classroom"**

Beirut, April 29 -- Under the patronage, and in the presence, of His Excellency the Minister of Education and Higher Education, Abd-ar-Rahim Murad, His Excellency the Minister of Environment, Michel Mousa, and His Excellency the American Ambassador, Vincent M. Battle, the International Education And Resource Network iEARN-Lebanon has organized a "YouthCaN" (Youth Communicating and Networking) workshop on "Technology And Environment In The Classroom". The workshop was held at The Planet Discovery - Children Science Museum, Beirut Central District, at 4:00 p.m. The workshop was attended by senior officials of the ministries of education and environment, officials of the American Embassy Public Affairs and Economic-Commercial sections, as well as the Director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Lebanon, Mr. Jon Breslar, iEARN-Lebanon Coordinator, Ms. Eliane Metni, and representatives of educational and environmental organizations. During the workshop, live discussions were conducted with "YouthCaN" participants in New York through video technology.

This event was made possible through partnership and funding from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-Lebanon, and Planet Discovery, Children and Science Museum; and thanks to the valuable cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Ministry of Environment.

iEARN, a pioneer in on-line Project-Based Learning since 1988, is a network that brings together teachers and students around the world in over 80 on-line collaborative projects. iEARN participating countries include: Algeria, Egypt, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, Tunisia and the United States. In May 1999, iEARN initiated the CIVICS (Community

Voices, Collaborative Solutions) pilot program with the financial support of the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Office of Citizen Exchanges, Office of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, and Regional English Language Offices, and government ministries in the participating countries. The CIVICS Program is a civic education and English language exchange and training program; it aims at providing practical internet-based collaboration tools to educators from the participating countries to enhance their civic education and social science curricula; it also supports the development of project-based curricula for English language instruction in the classroom, in projects related to language, human and social sciences, math, science and environment.

iEARN-Lebanon program was implemented in several schools throughout Lebanon during the academic year 2001-2002. Students and teachers from these schools participated in several projects designed to enhance understanding of environmental issues and to stimulate young people to take positive steps in their local communities to address them; the most prominent projects are "YouthCaN", "A Vision", the "Laws of Life", and an E-Commerce exchange program. This initiative will continue in the academic year 2002-2003 and will expand to additional new schools. Students will collaborate in research, information gathering, cross-comparative studies, civics and global issues discussions. On-line communications can be conducted in Arabic, French, or English. All projects have a finished product such as a publication, a CD-ROM, or a WebSite, that can be shared by schools in the participating countries, as well as school administrators, the media, and other concerned leaders in the community.

In his remarks, Ambassador Battle underscored the importance of computer-based learning in today's world of global communications. Addressing the Lebanese students who are participating in the "YouthCaN" project with their peers from around the world, he compared them to those famous scholars and researchers who reach out to other scientists in their field, share important research data with their colleagues, and often collaborate on their research projects: both the students with their modest efforts and the international prize-winning scholars with their major achievements contribute to a better world.