

U.S. State Department Middle East Webchats

The Near East Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of State officially has launched its webchat program. A webchat is an online forum in Arabic in which private citizens will submit questions online and can engage in a dialogue with Americans in order to find out more about issues relevant to them. The webchats will cover a variety of topics, from "What is a PRT?" to "Muslim Life in the U.S." They represent an opportunity for Arabs to communicate directly with State Department officials.

The hosts will include officials from the State Department, other government employees, experts from think tanks and other non-government employees. The participants will be people who read and type in Arabic and who have a computer and Internet access. Webchats are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 – 10:30 AM EST. Participants log-on through the Arabic version of america.gov (<http://webchat.state.gov/?tid=unsecure.login&language=arabic>), where they can submit their questions both during the webchats an up to a week prior to them.