

American

NEWS & VIEWS

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Secretary Clinton Sees U.S. Aid Based on “Partnership, Not Patronage”

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says the United States is elevating development to play a role equal to diplomacy and defense in U.S. foreign policy, and says efforts to end poverty and inequality are indispensable to creating a more stable and democratic world.

The secretary spoke January 6 at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington. She said the Obama administration’s emphasis on development is based on “partnership, not patronage,” with the countries it is seeking to help.

Instead of dictating solutions from afar, the United States will work with countries that “take the lead in designing and implementing evidence-based strategies with clear goals,” Clinton said.

“Development built on consultation rather than decree is more likely to engender the local leadership and ownership necessary to turn good ideas into lasting results,” she said.

At the same time, the United States is looking for partners who are demonstrating their own commitment to development by “practicing good governance, rooting out corruption, making their own financial contribution to their own development.”

Along with employing sound economic policies, the Obama administration expects countries rich in natural resources to be “managing those resources sustainably, and devoting some of the profits to people’s development.”

The secretary said the U.S. approach, in programs such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation, “highlights the difference between aid and investment.” The United States will continue to provide aid such as food and medicine around the world, but “we hope one day, far from now, to put ourselves out of the aid business, except for emergencies,” she said.

Instead, through strategic investment, “we seek to break the cycle of dependence that aid can create, by helping countries build their own institutions and their own capacity to deliver essential services,” she said.

The Obama administration is seeking a “safer, more prosperous, more democratic and more equitable world,” the secretary said, and development is “a strategic,

economic and moral imperative, as central to advancing American interests and solving global problems as diplomacy and defense.”

One third of humanity lives in conditions that offer little opportunity for improvement for them or their children, she said. At the same time, it is difficult to stop terrorism when hundreds of millions of young people “see a future with no jobs, no hope and no way ever to catch up to the developed world.”

Many have found themselves “on the wrong side of globalization, cut off from markets and out of reach of modern technologies,” and it is difficult to help advance human rights “when hunger and poverty threaten to undermine the good governance and rule of law needed to make those rights real,” Clinton said.

The secretary said U.S. development assistance around the world will now be measured by what is achieved, rather than what is spent. She added that accumulated development experience and technology innovations have made the 21st century an era to do development “better than it’s ever been done before, and to do it for more people, in more places.”

Along with investments in areas such as health, agriculture, security, education, energy and local governance, Secretary Clinton said, the United States will also be designing development programs specifically to help women and girls, who she said are “one of the world’s greatest untapped resources.”

Studies have shown that the children of a woman who has even one year of education will be less likely to die young or from hunger and more likely to go to school themselves, she said.

“Investing in the potential of women to lift and lead their societies is one of the best investments we can make,” Clinton said.

When Global Temperature Rises by 2 Degrees Celsius

By Cheryl Pellerin
Science Writer

The figure at left, from the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, shows how rising temperatures affect water, ecosystems, food, coastlines and health.

MEASURABLE EFFECTS TODAY

First, it’s important to note that climate change is already having an impact on temperature and sea level. In the 20th century, average global temperature rose by 0.74 degrees C (1.3 degrees F) and sea level, because warming

water causes water to expand, rose by 17 centimeters (6.7 inches).

Climate change is also causing an increase in the frequency, intensity and duration of floods, droughts and heat waves and a related increase in human illness and death. Globally, the area affected by drought has increased since the 1970s.

Precipitation has increased significantly in eastern parts of North and South America, northern Europe and central Asia and declined in the Sahel, the Mediterranean, southern Africa and parts of south Asia. Hundreds of millions of people now face increased water stress such as damage from floods and storms.

IF TEMPERATURES RISE BY 2 DEGREES C

According to the IPCC, if global average temperature rises by 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F), rising sea levels and melting snow and ice across the globe could submerge several small island states and Bangladesh. The Maldives islands, with land surface barely a meter or two above sea level, will suffer major danger to life and property with every storm surge and major upwelling of the seas.

Up to 30 percent of species will be at increasing risk of extinction. Most corals will be bleached. Millions more people could experience coastal flooding each year. Some kinds of food productivity will decrease in low latitudes and rise in mid to high latitudes. Ecosystems will change. Growing numbers of people in the poorest countries will suffer from malnutrition and from diarrheal, cardio-respiratory and infectious diseases.

The Copenhagen Accord proposes to assess by 2015 how countries are keeping the global temperature rise below 2 degrees C. At that time, nations could consider changing the temperature-rise goal to 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F).

Read more about international mitigation and adaptation efforts, the trade-offs necessary to keeping global temperature at 2 degrees C or below, and the reasons there will be some rise in temperature no matter what nations do today to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Story of 27th Amendment Shows Individual's Power in a Democracy

Change to Constitution achieved through one citizen's campaign for reform

By Jianan Wang
Staff Writer

Jianan Wang blogs about life in the United States on the Chinese-language blog "Wild Geese from Foggy Bottom." The following article has been adapted from one of his entries.

Washington — Even in a country as large as the United States, one determined citizen can bring about change, even with a proposal that collected dust for nearly two centuries.

In the early days of the United States, the 1st Congress passed 12 proposed amendments to the U.S. Constitution but only 10 — later known as the Bill of Rights — were ratified by the states and became law, in 1791. One of the two amendments that failed in the 18th century to be ratified by the necessary three-fourths of the states eventually became the 27th Amendment through the efforts of an ordinary citizen 202 years later.

The amendment, which states "No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened," is intended to serve as a restraint on the power of Congress to set its own salary — a power that has obvious potential for conflict of interest.

Early congresses showed almost no signs of acting as corrupt interest groups, so there was little incentive to revive the failed amendment. But in 1873, the 47th Congress passed an amendment to the general appropriations bill to double the annual salary of the president from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and increase its members' salary by 50 percent, from \$5,000 to \$7,500 per year. The amendment made the increase retroactive to 1871 for congressional members, giving them two years of back pay. The great "Salary Grab," as it was known, produced widespread public outrage and prompted Ohio to ratify the sleeping constitutional amendment on congressional compensation. Months later, Congress repealed the provision in an 1873 law that increased its members' pay.

During the next 100 years, as the United States rose to become one of the world's superpowers, congressional salaries kept pace with inflation and average wages in the country. But in the 1970s, the oil embargo of 1973 quadrupled oil prices and the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) dropped 4.5 percent. Then, the 1979 Iran hostage crisis triggered another round of energy shortages, and four subsequent recessions (1970, 1973–75, 1980 and 1981–82) led to widespread unemployment and frozen wages in many occupations. Yet, during roughly the same period, annual salaries for those serving in Congress tripled, from \$44,600 to \$125,100, compared to a 7 percent increase in the median U.S. wage during the same period.

That sharp contrast led some U.S. citizens to begin a movement to revive the dormant congressional-compensation amendment. In 1978, the Wyoming Legislature ratified it.

ONE CONCERNED CITIZEN

In 1982, Gregory D. Watson, a college sophomore at the University of Texas, Austin, while researching the passed – but not ratified – Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) of the 1970s for his term paper, found the unratified 1789 congressional-compensation amendment and decided to change his paper's topic. He argued that because the 1789 amendment had no time limit, states could still ratify it and the amendment could become law. Watson's government professor was unimpressed and gave the paper a "C" grade, but Watson remained intrigued by his discovery.

At that time seven states had ratified the amendment, so Watson needed 31 more to achieve 38, or three-quarters of the 50 states. He began his advocacy efforts in states where both of the bodies of the state legislature were controlled by one political party. In 1983, he convinced the state of Maine to ratify the amendment, and he won ratification in Colorado the following year.

Watson's campaign soon attracted a few famous names, including Paul Gann, a California-based conservative political activist; Ralph Nader, the Green Party presidential candidate; and a few members of Congress. Their support had little effect, but Watson persevered, working several jobs to fund his efforts and using his limited spare time to call and write to state legislators.

From 1985 to 1988, Watson helped win ratification by 18 more states, and came close to meeting his goal of completing the ratification process by the 200th anniversary of the amendment's original passage by Congress.

Seven states ratified the amendment in 1989, two more in 1990, and one more in 1991. By the spring of 1992 several states were racing to become the 38th state and make it the law of the land. On May 5, 1992, Missouri and Alabama both ratified the amendment, followed by Michigan and New Jersey on May 7 and Illinois on May 12.

On May 18, 1992, the archivist of the United States, Don W. Wilson, announced the 27th Amendment had been ratified. On May 20, 1992, the Senate voted 99 to 0 to accept the ratification of the 27th Amendment, and the House of Representatives voted its acceptance 414 to 3.

In some ways, it is fair to say that Watson himself amended the Constitution. He was a concerned citizen who sincerely believed this amendment would improve the Constitution in just the manner that the 1st Congress had sought.

"The American people want a Congress that is honest,

that has integrity. This amendment is one vehicle by which some degree of decorum can be restored," Watson was quoted as saying in a *New York Times* article on May 8, 1992.

After the amendment was ratified, a reporter tracked down the professor who graded Watson's paper and told her what Watson had achieved. The teacher apologized for giving him a "C," but told him the grade could not be amended.

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