

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## Vice President Biden Offers U.S. Support for Peaceful, Credible Sudan Referendum

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States is strongly committed to seeing the planned referendum on southern Sudanese self-determination take place on time and in a way that credibly reflects the will of the southern Sudanese, Vice President Biden told a delegation from south Sudan June 9.

Biden met with a delegation led by Salva Kiir Mayardit, president of Southern Sudan and first vice president of Sudan's Government of National Unity, in Nairobi before Biden left the Kenyan capital for South Africa.

According to a summary of the meeting released by the White House June 9, Biden recognized the "great strides" made in the South to establish state institutions and responsible governance since 2005, when its leaders signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with the Sudanese government. However, he urged that more be done to increase the "capacity, efficiency and transparency" of the state institutions regardless of the outcome of the referendum, which is scheduled for January 2011.

The CPA peace deal was signed to end Sudan's 22-year civil war between the largely Christian and animist South and the mainly Muslim North. The agreement includes autonomy for the South and a share in the country's oil revenues, as well as an agreement to hold the referendum, which offers the South and the oil-rich Abyei region a path to independence.

Vice President Biden underscored to Kiir "the need for southern leadership and international mobilization in ensuring that all necessary measures are in place for a peaceful outcome that is internationally recognized, and offered U.S. political, financial and technical support to that end," the White House statement said.

He also urged the southern Sudanese to immediately begin negotiations with the government in Khartoum on post-referendum arrangements such as border demarcation, revenue sharing and citizenship rights, "noting that there is insufficient time before the South's potential independence to wait" before tackling the issues.

Biden pledged the Obama administration's continued assistance in helping to professionalize the Sudan People's Liberation Army, recognizing "the serious threats to security faced by the South," the statement said. While in Nairobi, Biden also discussed the situation in

Somalia with United Nations Special Representative for Somalia Ahmedou Ould Abdallah and a delegation that included the special representative of the chairperson of the African Union (AU), Boubacar Gaoussou Diarra, AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) Force Commander Nathan Mugisha, and Ugandan Minister of Defense Crispus Kiyonga.

The White House said the vice president discussed further steps necessary to help the Somali people achieve stability, as well as the challenges facing AMISOM and the "urgent need for greater political inclusivity and stability in the Transitional Federal Government."

Biden commended AMISOM for its peacekeeping efforts in Somalia and discussed steps to bolster its capacity, the statement said.

## Secretary Clinton Affirms U.S. Funding for Caribbean Security Initiative

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton welcomed the launch of the new Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), saying it will strengthen security in the region while including more Caribbean citizens in the shared effort to reduce transnational crime and illegal trafficking.

Clinton joined the leaders of Caribbean states in Barbados June 10 to celebrate the beginning of the partnership. She affirmed the State Department's commitment of funds to back the effort.

"For all of us, the safety of our people must be our highest priority. That's why today we are committing ourselves to CBSI," Clinton told Caribbean leaders, according to a June 10 State Department release. "We've worked with the U.S. Congress to identify over \$45 million in funding for this effort this year. And we've asked for \$79 million in next year's budget — a \$124 million commitment to CBSI over two years."

U.S. funding for the CBSI will combat illegal trafficking in drugs and small arms and help to strengthen the capacity of regional defense, law enforcement and justice-sector institutions.

The funding also targets the populations of Caribbean countries by increasing employment skills training and educational opportunities for those who are vulnerable to being recruited by criminal organizations, as well as providing alternatives to at-risk youth through increased job training and employment opportunities.

"We all know well that addressing transnational security challenges in the 21st century requires a comprehensive approach. CBSI means working together not only to strengthen national security forces and anti-trafficking efforts, but also focusing on broader citizen safety partnerships and social inclusion," Clinton said, according to the State Department.

The United States and other countries in the region plan to use the CBSI to attract and incorporate support from non-Caribbean states in reducing illegal trafficking, increasing public safety and promoting social justice.

The State Department said U.S. and Caribbean government representatives have met four times in recent months to develop the initiative's goals.

During Clinton's meetings with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), she was also expected to focus on recent gang violence in Jamaica, Haiti's continuing recovery from the January 12 earthquake, and environmental issues, including the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

### **United States, Indonesia Intensify Science Cooperation**

*Science envoy proposes partnering on education, policy, scientist exchange*

By Cheryl L Pellerin  
Science Writer

Washington – Collaboration is intensifying between Indonesia and the United States with the 2010 signing of a new science and technology agreement and an 11-day visit in May by one of President Obama's science envoys.

The two nations previously signed a science and technology cooperative agreement in 1992 that expired in 2002. On March 29, U.S. Ambassador Cameron Hume and Indonesian Minister of Research and Technology Suharna Surapranata signed a new agreement that opens the door to the exchange of science and technology experts and information; joint research projects, seminars and workshops; and direct collaboration between U.S. and Indonesian government agencies, universities and research institutes.

During a June 8 celebration in Washington of the anniversary of President Obama's historic commitment in Cairo to renew engagement with Muslim-majority countries, officials and scientists from the United States, Asia and North Africa discussed the importance of science and technology to their nations.

"In Indonesia, much still needs to be worked on to achieve improved health services, education, food

resilience, infrastructure, environment and disaster management. For these needs and to lift many more millions out of poverty, Indonesia needs to boost its creative base and rate of technology innovation," Salman Al Farisi, deputy chief of mission at the Indonesian Embassy in Washington, told attendees.

"My government," he said, "has set its sights on this goal – to become one of the innovation nations and be an integral part of the world scientific community."

### SCIENCE ENVOYS

Obama announced the science envoy program in Cairo in 2009, and the first envoys were chosen by the U.S. National Academies with help from the White House and the State Department. Obama envisioned the envoys would investigate partnership opportunities in all areas of science as a way to improve relations between the United States and Muslim-majority nations.

Nobel Prize-winning scientist Ahmed Zewail visited Egypt and Turkey in January and Qatar in February. Former National Institutes of Health Director Elias Zerhouni visited UNESCO in Paris, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya from February to April, and Bruce Alberts, editor in chief of Science magazine and former president of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, traveled to Indonesia in May.

Alberts met with senior government officials, including Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and with ministers and representatives from the science, education, nonprofit and business communities. Yudhoyono highlighted climate change, health and communicable diseases, clean energy, food and water security, and education as priority areas for collaboration.

The science envoy recommended helping Indonesia bolster its science education system, partnering to create a national science foundation to make science research grants, and tripling the number of Indonesians studying in the United States and the number of Americans studying in Indonesia.

In July, he said, a 10-person Indonesian delegation will travel to the United States to attend a workshop given by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Science Resources Center about how best to teach science.

The Frontiers of Science program, a young-scientist exchange effort of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, will be held in Indonesia "probably early next spring," Alberts said. The United States is engaged in the program with China, India, Japan and Germany. The program allows about 40 of the best young American scientists to

meet with their counterparts in those countries each year.

#### U.S.-INDONESIA SCIENCE

As a result of Obama's program of engagement with Muslim-majority countries and the new science and technology agreement with Indonesia, U.S. technical agencies and universities are engaged in many cooperative programs in Indonesia.

From June to August, an international team led by scientists from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Indonesia will collaborate to explore the depths of Indonesian waters.

The expedition, called INDEX 2010 for Indonesia-U.S. Deep-Sea Exploration of the Sangihe Talaud Region, is featuring the maiden voyage of NOAA ship Okeanos Explorer; the first joint Indonesia-U.S. ocean exploration expedition; and the first joint international mission with two ships sending live video to scientists in exploration command centers ashore.

In mid-2011, Okeanos Explorer and the Indonesian research vessel Baruna Jaya will make a pioneering joint mission to the Coral Triangle – the tropical waters of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste that contain at least 500 species of reef-building corals in each region.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has teamed up with Indonesia in a program called Breathe Easy Jakarta to create programs aimed at reducing air pollution and improving health. The effort will develop and apply science-based strategies to control urban air pollution.

Records of past temperature, precipitation and air chemistry are stored in the layers of ice caps and ice fields. In June, U.S. and Indonesian scientists will complete a project to extract information from surviving glaciers near Puncak Jaya in Indonesia. The goal is to drill six ice cores and analyze them to reconstruct climate variability over time.

Project partners are the Meteorological, Climatological and Geophysical Agency of Indonesia, the Byrd Polar Research Center of Ohio State University and the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory of Columbia University.

At the State Department, Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton has committed to expanding the number of environment, science, technology and health (ESTH) officers at U.S. embassies. Four of the positions will be in Indonesia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Bangladesh.

#### U.S. Economy Continues Growing at Moderate Pace

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington – The U.S. economy continues to grow at a moderate pace, but the unemployment rate will likely see only a “slow reduction” over time, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke says.

Testifying before the House of Representatives Budget Committee June 9, Bernanke said the gross domestic product, the broadest measure of national economic activity, is expected to grow at a rate of approximately 3.5 percent in 2010 and at a somewhat faster pace in 2011, based on calculations made by the Federal Reserve Board and the nation's Reserve Bank presidents. The U.S. Federal Reserve, with headquarters in Washington, is the nation's central bank, and there are 12 Federal Reserve district banks across the United States.

“The economy ... appears to be on track to continue to expand through this year and next,” Bernanke said. In the wake of the steepest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s, he said, the economy has been supported by stimulative monetary policy and concerted efforts by the federal government to stabilize the financial system.

As the support to economic growth from government stimulus policies diminishes during 2010, overall economic activity should sustain the recovery that began in the middle of 2009, Bernanke said.

However, he said that growth pegged at 3.5 percent over 2010 will not be sufficient to stimulate a broad recovery in the nation's unemployment rate, which now stands at 9.7 percent, with approximately 15 million unemployed Americans. According to the Labor Department's latest monthly employment report, private companies in May added only 41,000 new jobs, the fewest since the start of the year. The largest increase in employment occurred because the federal government is providing temporary jobs for census takers nationwide.

Bernanke told committee members that since late last year the financial markets have been concerned by the ability of Greece and a number of other euro-area countries to manage their sizable budget deficits and high levels of public debt. European leaders have instituted a broad range of strong corrective measures, he said.

“If markets continue to stabilize, then the effects of the crisis on economic growth in the United States seem likely to be modest,” Bernanke said.

On the federal budget deficit, Bernanke warned Congress that over the long term the federal budget appears to be on an unsustainable path.

“To avoid sharp, disruptive shifts in spending programs and tax policies in the future, and to retain the confidence of the public and the markets, we should be planning now how we will meet these looming budgetary challenges,” Bernanke said. “Unless we as a nation make a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility, in the longer run we will have neither financial stability nor healthy economic growth.”

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