

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## Secretary Clinton Opens Direct Mideast Peace Talks

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton opened the first direct Israeli-Palestinian peace talks in nearly two years September 2, telling Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas that “only you can make the decisions necessary to reach an agreement and secure a peaceful future for the Israeli and Palestinian people.”

“For our part, the United States has pledged its full support for these talks, and we will be an active and sustained partner,” Clinton said. “We believe ... that you can succeed. And we understand that this is in the national security interests of the United States.”

“But we cannot and we will not impose a solution,” Clinton added.

The negotiations opened in the ornate Benjamin Franklin Room at the State Department’s Washington headquarters. Netanyahu and Abbas, along with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Abdullah of Jordan, dined with President Obama at the White House September 1. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is the special representative of the Quartet for Middle East Peace, which is the United Nations, the European Union, Russia and the United States, also attended the dinner and negotiations.

Obama spoke before the White House dinner, saying that “each of you are the heirs of peacemakers who dared greatly ... statesmen who saw the world as it was but also imagined the world as it should be.”

“Now, like each of them, we must ask, ‘Do we have the wisdom and the courage to walk the path of peace?’” Obama said. Before the talks began, Obama met individually with Netanyahu, Abbas, Mubarak and King Abdullah.

The president invited Mubarak and King Abdullah to attend the opening of talks because of the critical roles they have played in helping jump-start the indirect talks and in helping to reach the direct talks. “I thanked President Mubarak of Egypt and His Majesty King Abdullah of Jordan, for their valuable leadership and for the support that will be necessary going forward,” he said. Their continued support for the peace process is vital, Obama said, because the two-state solution is essential for their peace and the peace and security of the region and the world.

“So even as we are clear-eyed about the challenges ahead,

so, too, do we see the foundation for progress,” Obama said earlier in the afternoon September 1 at the White House.

In her opening remarks September 2, Clinton acknowledged how difficult the negotiations that lay ahead will be for the two sides, and that there will be obstacles and setbacks as there have been before.

“Success will take patience, persistence and leadership,” she added. But she said that it is possible to resolve the core issues facing Netanyahu and Abbas within one year. The core issues to be resolved in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process include determining the final borders of a Palestinian state, the future of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements in occupied areas, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, water rights, and future relations between the two states that include assurances for Israeli security.

### LEADERS RESPOND

Netanyahu spoke after the secretary’s opening remarks and looked across at Abbas and said, “I see in you a partner for peace. Together, we can lead our people to a historic future that can put an end to claims and to conflict.”

Abbas responded in measured tones through an interpreter that “we start from here to reach a peace that will end the conflict, that will meet all the demands and start a new era between the Israeli and the Palestinian people.” But both leaders in their remarks agreed with Clinton that the negotiations will be difficult and require concessions from both sides.

The negotiations follow a period of indirect, or proximity, talks that began last May, spearheaded by U.S. Special Envoy for Middle East Peace George Mitchell.

After the opening session September 2, Clinton, Netanyahu and Abbas held a private meeting.

At a press briefing later, Mitchell told reporters that the two sides have agreed to hold further talks September 14–15 in the region and will continue to meet every two weeks thereafter. Mitchell added that he and Clinton will attend the next meeting.

Mitchell said that he and Clinton both met with Netanyahu and Abbas privately for an hour and a half after the opening remarks, and that the talks were long and productive, reflecting a constructive and positive mood, though he would not provide specifics of the discussions. He reminded reporters that Netanyahu and Abbas have known each other for many years in both a political and personal context.

## Secretary Clinton Urges Citizens to Give to Pakistan Relief Fund

*State Department reaches Americans, world via television and radio*

By Jane Morse  
Staff Writer

Washington — As the scope of the devastation inflicted by the flooding in Pakistan becomes ever more evident, the United States is promoting new ways for citizens to join the effort to help flood victims.

In television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) released August 31 by the Ad Council — a private, nonprofit U.S. organization that marshals charitable efforts by the advertising and media industries — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton encourages Americans to donate to the Pakistan Relief Fund. Created by the U.S. State Department, the fund is meant to raise the profile of Pakistan's needs to donors around the world whose generosity can help.

The new PSAs direct audiences in the United States and around the world to visit the State Department's Pakistan Relief Fund page to make donations. U.S.-based callers can also donate by text-messaging the word "FLOOD" to 27722; each text raises \$10 for Pakistan flood relief.

As Clinton said in her August 19 announcement of the Pakistan Relief Fund, the flooding in Pakistan has affected 20 million people — more than the 2010 Haiti earthquake, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami combined.

The United States has committed \$150 million for Pakistan flood relief and has diverted another \$50 million from a multiyear, multibillion dollar development plan for Pakistan. Individual Americans and U.S. businesses have also been generous with assistance for Pakistani flood victims: As of September 1, \$8.39 million in private-sector contributions had been made to help Pakistan recover from flooding, according to a State Department fact sheet.

## U.S., Indonesia Build Scientific Partnerships for Climate, Health

*Projects target ocean science, climate policy, infectious disease research*

By Cheryl Pellerin  
Science Writer

Washington — A digital videoconference flickered to life early in the morning of August 26 in Washington and just after sunset in Jakarta, where Indonesian scientists and government officials gathered to break their fast in a religious observance called buka puasa during the Islamic month of Ramadan.

On this evening, the traditional celebration, in an island nation with the largest Muslim population in the world, also embraced the country's intense interest in science and technology.

In Jakarta, from the residence of U.S. Embassy Chargé d'Affairs Ted Osius, and in Washington, from a conference room at the State Department, participants discussed collaborations in ocean exploration, climate change and clinical research on infectious diseases.

"Indonesia, with its achievements in science and technology, is the home of more than 200 million Muslims with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds," said professor Zuhul Abdul Kadir, chairman of Indonesia's National Innovation Committee and rector of University Al-Azhar in Jakarta. "We can be a powerful example that Islam, democracy and modernity can go hand in hand."

"Barack Obama has a commitment to science diplomacy and international science and technology collaboration that is placing these themes at the forefront of U.S. diplomacy," said Lawrence Gumbiner, deputy assistant secretary of state for science, space and health.

The U.S.-Indonesian relationship, he said, "is a partnership that will be continuing and deepening. We look forward to both Muslim and non-Muslim researchers and collaborators working together to solve these great problems that we all share on the global stage."

### SCIENCE IN ACTION

"You can see that we're starting to fulfill the vision laid out by President Obama [during his 2009 Cairo University speech] of science and engagement in action," Osius said.

One such collaboration under way is the Indonesia-USA Deep-Sea Exploration of the Sangihe Talaud region, called INDEX 2010. The three-year partnership between the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Indonesian Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, and the Indonesian Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology will map the seafloor and study the rich marine biodiversity of an area of Southeast Asia where the Indian and Pacific oceans meet.

Another initiative is the Frontiers of Science Program, a young-scientist exchange effort of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

"Dr. Marzuki [molecular biologist Sangkot Marzuki, president of the Indonesian Academy of Sciences] and I have been working hard on the Frontiers of Science Program," said Bruce Alberts from Washington.

Alberts is a prominent U.S. biochemist who is editor in

chief of the international weekly journal Science and a U.S. science envoy. Alberts traveled to Indonesia in May as part of the science envoy program to help build the capacity of local institutions in science and technology and connect the next generation of U.S. and Indonesian science leaders.

"You sent a delegation of people to a workshop on science education for children here. I met with them briefly in Washington and we're looking forward to following up on that," he said, adding that he looks forward to his next visit to Indonesia.

There is also an ongoing effort between the countries to study and combat climate change. The Indonesian Climate Change Center, which received an initial \$7 million in U.S. funding under the U.S.-Indonesia Comprehensive Partnership, was announced in June. The investment is part of a \$136 million package the United States committed to Indonesia over three years for climate change and other environmental programs.

#### CLINICAL RESEARCH NETWORK

The latest project in development includes Indonesia's National Institute of Health Research and Development (NIHRD), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

"We're very excited about the potential for a major collaboration on infectious disease clinical research," F. Gray Handley, associate director for international research affairs and acting director of the Office of Global Research at NIAID, said from Washington.

The collaboration builds on a continuing partnership begun in 2005 among the United States, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam called the Southeast Asia Infectious Disease Clinical Research Network, which at first focused on influenza.

Now, a similarly designed network in Indonesia will focus on technology transfer, training and collaborative research on diseases like malaria, dengue, influenza and other communicable diseases.

"The idea is to work with the NIHRD, the Eijkman Institute and seven or eight of the leading medical schools that are affiliated with top hospitals or clinical care providers to form a network within Indonesia that U.S. scientists can collaborate with," Handley said. "The focus will be on Indonesian scientific and public health priorities, and the expansion of infectious disease clinical research capacity for the benefit of Indonesia."

Handley said consultations are under way to organize the network and develop initial research protocols, which are detailed plans for conducting specific research and collecting data.

"The shared vision is for Indonesian investigators and institutions to be equal partners with American institutions and scientists through a focus on common research interests," he added. "Indonesia has outstanding, well-trained physicians and nurses, outstanding institutions in the public and private sector and very well-developed medical schools."

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