

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## President Obama on Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Retirement

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
October 7, 2010

Statement by the President on the Retirement of Archbishop Desmond Tutu

It is with deep appreciation that I note Archbishop Desmond Tutu's retirement from public life today on the occasion of his 79th birthday. This event invites us to celebrate his many accomplishments from which we have all benefited. For decades he has been a moral titan—a voice of principle, an unrelenting champion of justice, and a dedicated peacemaker. He played a pivotal role in his country's struggle against apartheid and extraordinary example of pursuing a path to forgiveness and reconciliation in the new South Africa. He has also been an outspoken voice for freedom and justice in countries across the globe; a staunch defender of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons; and an advocate for treatment and prevention programs to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS. We will miss his insight and his activism, but will continue to learn from his example. We wish the Archbishop and his family happiness in the years ahead.

## Secretary Clinton: Mobile Phone Access Key to Opportunity for Women

By MacKenzie C. Babb  
Staff Writer

Washington — Increasing women's access to mobile technology is critical in providing opportunity and achieving global gender equality, says Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

"The spread of cell phones has launched a new era of possibility in the fights against poverty, disease, hunger, corruption and political oppression," Clinton said October 7 in Washington at the launch of the mWomen initiative.

The initiative is a public-private partnership between the international development community and the global mobile phone industry, represented by the initiative's primary sponsor GSMA, which represents the interests of the worldwide mobile communications industry.

The goal is to increase women's access to mobile technology. Currently, 300 million more men than women have access to cell phones. MWomen aims to cut this mobile gender gap in half during the next three years by providing mobile technology to at least 150 million

women.

Clinton said the initiative is not only working to solve a problem, but also is seizing an opportunity. According to GSMA, closing the mobile phone gender gap represents a potential \$13 billion increase in annual revenue for mobile operators worldwide.

Clinton said that in addition to the opportunities this will create for private sector investment, increasing women's access to cell phones will provide a wealth of benefits for women and their communities around the world.

For one, she said, mobile technology can accelerate economic development.

"With a cell phone, a farmer in sub-Saharan Africa can learn how to protect her crops from pests that would otherwise destroy a harvest; an entrepreneur in Latin America can more easily obtain a business license, or communicate with a mentor or a customer; a woman in Asia can use her mobile banking to control her family finances or budget for school fees or save for a new house," Clinton said.

She added that mobile technology can also improve governance and strengthen democratic institutions.

"For example, in the recent voting on a constitution in Kenya, where previous elections have led to violence, peace was maintained, thanks in part to technology that tallied ballots in real time," the secretary said.

Also, Clinton said mobile technology fosters health and education, especially in places where systems do not yet exist.

"With cell phones, expectant mothers who live nowhere near a clinic can still receive prenatal health tips; students whose teachers rarely show up at school can still move ahead with their lessons," Clinton said.

Cherie Blair, wife of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, joined Clinton at the launch. Her Cherie Blair Foundation sponsored research with GSMA that highlighted the importance of expanding mobile technology to women.

"Having access to a mobile phone bolsters personal security. It enables small businesses to prosper. It increases incomes. And it makes it easier to access banking services and credit," Blair said.

She said more than nine out of 10 women surveyed said they felt safer because of their phone, and more than eight of 10 felt more independent. She added that more than half of the women in the study reported they had earned

additional income because of their mobile phones.

Kapilaben Vankar, a small farmer from India, spoke at the launch about how gaining access to a mobile phone allowed her to diversify and expand her business. She called mobile technology a “powerful tool” in connecting women, allowing them to become more prosperous and empowering them to fight global poverty.

### **No Desire for Direct U.S. Role in South China Sea Dispute**

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States is willing to lend its support to a process that will encourage dialogue between China and its neighbors over territorial disputes such as the ones in the South China Sea, but feels it is inappropriate to play a direct role, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell told reporters in Japan.

Speaking with reporters in Tokyo October 6, Campbell said, “There is no desire of any of the claimants” for the United States to play a direct role in the disagreement between China and several of its neighbors over the sovereignty of the Spratly and Paracel island chains in the South China Sea. The islands may be rich in natural resources.

“We fully recognize that we are not a claimant. We have no territorial ambitions of our own. We have long-standing interests in the maintenance of peace and stability, the maintenance of peaceful commerce, and freedom of navigation,” he said.

What the claimants want “is for the United States to support a process,” Campbell said. “There’s not a desire for a facilitator, to be perfectly honest.”

The Obama administration believes that ultimately “a process of open diplomacy and dialogue is the best way to create clear expectations and rules of the road,” including resolving tensions over fishing boats, scientific craft and other maritime vessels in the area, he said.

During her July meetings in Vietnam with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton urged claimants to pursue resolution of their disputes in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, rather than through coercion.

“What Secretary Clinton attempted to lay out was a process, a peaceful diplomatic process whereby issues could be dealt with in a constructive manner,” Campbell said.

“We are seeing some encouraging signs about the beginning of a diplomatic process between ASEAN and China, and we encourage and support that effort very much,” he said.

The assistant secretary said he and his Japanese counterparts had discussed the 50-year U.S.-Japan alliance. There is “increasing recognition on both sides of the importance of our alliance as we together face significant changes in the political and security environment in Asia,” Campbell said.

“It is very hard to operate effectively — diplomatically, politically or strategically — in Asia without a strong relationship with Japan, and it is critical for this generation of American policymakers to in no way take Japan for granted,” he said.

“We’re well at work at taking steps to modernize, to have a forward-looking strategy to make sure that the U.S.-Japan alliance is as influential and significant over the course of the next 20 years as it has been over the last,” Campbell added.

China and Japan have been disputing the sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands, called the Diaoyu Islands in China. Campbell praised the statesmanship of Japan’s leaders in resolving a recent incident by releasing the captain of a Chinese fishing boat from custody after he had rammed two Japanese Coast Guard vessels in the Senkakus.

“Obviously these circumstances have the potential to spin out of control. At critical moments, they require a leader to take stock and recognize the potential for long-term harm,” he said. Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan “saw the potential for a dramatic degradation in relations, recognized that was not in the interest of Japan, frankly, of China or other countries in Asia, and he took the necessary steps,” he said.

Campbell said the United States now hopes to see “a rebuilding of trust and ties” between China and Japan.

“As both countries are increasingly reliant on freedom of navigation, freedom of the oceans, it seems to me that coming to terms with these issues will be essential going forward, and I think the United States wants to facilitate these dialogues involving a number of states in the Asia-Pacific region,” he said.

Both countries and the United States need to develop “rules of the road,” improve their understandings about the sensitive areas for each other and send clear signals about where their principles and deep national interests are being affected, he said.

“The fundamental challenge and art of diplomacy in the

21st century is ensuring that these deep national interests of the great powers are in alignment," Campbell said.

### **Third Grant Announced for U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center**

Washington — The Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory will receive \$12.5 million over the next five years to lead a consortium on energy-efficient building technologies under the U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center (CERC), U.S. Assistant Secretary of Energy for Policy and International Affairs David Sandalow announced October 7.

The funding will be matched by the lab's consortium partners to provide at least \$25 million in total U.S. funding. Chinese counterparts will contribute an additional \$25 million to support work being done by Chinese institutions and individuals.

"The U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center will help to save energy and cut costs in buildings in both the United States and China," Sandalow said. "This new partnership will also create new export opportunities for American companies, ensure the United States remains at the forefront of technology innovation, and help to reduce global carbon pollution."

Because U.S. buildings account for nearly 40 percent of the nation's energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, and nearly half of the new floor space built in the world each year is built in China, the United States and China have important roles to play as the world transitions to energy-efficient buildings, the Department of Energy said in a related press release.

The Lawrence Berkeley Lab will lead a consortium that includes Oak Ridge National Lab, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of California-Davis, the National Resources Defense Council, the Energy Foundation, ICF International, the National Association of State Energy Officials, the Association of State Energy Research and Technology Transfer Institutions, Dow Chemical Company, Honeywell, General Electric, Saint-Gobain, Bentley, ClimateMaster, and Pegasus Capital Advisors.

President Obama and President Hu Jintao of China announced the establishment of the CERC during Obama's trip to Beijing in November 2009. At that time, U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu joined Chinese Minister of Science and Technology Wan Gang and Chinese National Energy Administrator Zhang Guobao to sign the protocol launching the center.

On September 2, Chu announced \$25 million in funding over a five-year period for two other consortia:

- **Clean Coal:** West Virginia University is leading a consortium that includes the University of Wyoming, University of Kentucky, Indiana University, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory, National Energy Technology Laboratory, World Resources Institute, U.S.-China Clean Energy Forum, General Electric, Duke Energy, LP Amina, Babcock & Wilcox and American Electric Power to develop new technologies for carbon capture and sequestration.

- **Clean Vehicles:** The University of Michigan is leading a consortium that includes Ohio State University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sandia National Laboratories, Joint BioEnergy Institute, Oak Ridge National Laboratories, General Motors, Ford, Toyota, Chrysler, Cummins, Fraunhofer, MAGNET, A123, American Electric Power, First Energy and the Transportation Research Center and is focusing on vehicle electrification.

U.S. government funding will be used to support work conducted by U.S. institutions and individuals only. Chinese partners will be announced in the coming months by the Chinese government. Total funding for CERC, including private and public investments in both countries, will be at least \$150 million, according to the Department of Energy.

The October 7 announcement brings U.S. government funding committed to support CERC to \$37.5 million.

### **Randa Kuziez Makes Interfaith Activities Work Around the Globe**

By M. Scott Bortot  
Staff Writer

Washington — Randa Kuziez started interfaith activities at a young age, but it was an incident at a secondary school track meet that persuaded her to take up interfaith service as a career.

Kuziez, born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, did not know how to respond after the coach of an opposing team made disparaging remarks about her hijab. Her Christian friends rose to her defense.

"Don't talk like that. We need to respect one another. She wears that because of her religion," Kuziez recalled her teammates telling the coach. "I was so appreciative of what my friends said to him, but at the same time realized the importance of learning about one another and building these relationships based on mutual respect and tolerance."

Kuziez is still an athlete; she has earned a black belt in taekwondo and teaches the sport to youngsters. But most of

her work is in promoting interfaith efforts. A former Faith Acts Fellow with the Tony Blair Faith Foundation, she travels the world to discuss how interfaith activities can build stronger communities. In September, she presented a paper in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on how interfaith collaboration can save the lives of women in childbirth.

Most recently, the U.S. embassies in Jordan and Kuwait invited her to speak on how youth can combat poverty through interfaith efforts.

Faith-based organizations provide a substantial portion of aid around the world, and "faith communities need to be a part of the conversation," Kuziez said in an e-mail interview. "My faith tradition reminds me that Muslims should be the vanguards of compassionate action, mercy and well being for all of humanity, in each and every way possible."

Kuziez participated in leadership training for young Kuwaitis and Jordanians.

"I know I was there speaking but I felt like I was the one learning from them," she said. "I saw so many upcoming young leaders, I can't wait to share their stories and see what they're up to in a few years."

Kuziez graduated from Saint Louis University in 2007, winning its Woman of the Year award, and served as vice president of the Muslim Students Association of the United States and Canada. She went on to study for a master's degree in international affairs at Washington University, also in St. Louis.

While growing up, Kuziez was active with the youth group at her mosque, and her first interfaith project, through the Faith Beyond Walls organization, was helping build a playground in a poor community. The fact that it was an interfaith initiative was not important to her.

"I could care less. I just wanted to go help out! So I went and slowly got interested in interfaith work, but mostly the service," she said.

Kuziez said interfaith dialogue and activities have an important role to play in strengthening the United States, which has the world's most diverse religious community.

"With such diversity of faiths, it makes no sense not to learn about one another," she said. "At the same time, this knowledge should be followed by some sort of common action to improve the communities around us. To put it simply, we can get more things done together than we can apart."

In fact, Kuziez has proven that interfaith efforts can help people on the other side of the world. In 2007, she organized an iftar for Muslims and students from other faiths at Saint Louis University to raise money for the charity Malaria No More's projects in Mali. Sponsors provided one dollar for each student involved, and the effort raised more than \$1,000 to buy mosquito nets for the malaria-stricken country.

Sometimes the biggest challenge to interfaith activities is getting people to listen. Kuziez recalled facing hurdles to discussing Islam in a small American town. Although most of the town's churches were against her visit, 115 of the 2,000 residents came to hear her speak.

"After I spoke, an older man said to me, 'I genuinely thought "jihad" meant a war against Christians. Thank you for sharing with us today.'

"One conversation with a Muslim allowed him to open up and change a factually incorrect piece of information," Kuziez said. "Dialogue thus begins by getting to know one another and being comfortable sharing and learning from one another."

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