

American

NEWS & VIEWS

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Secretary Clinton Says India's Leadership Is Important for All Asia

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer

Washington — With a population of 1.3 billion people and a rapidly growing economy, India is “not simply emerging, but has emerged” as a global power, and it should play a leading role in the future of the Asia-Pacific region as well as Central and South Asia, says Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Speaking at the Anna Centenary Library in Chennai, India, on July 20, Clinton said India's advancements in science and technology and its vibrant example of democracy will help to enrich human lives around the world.

The United States believes that “the opening of India's markets to the world will produce a more prosperous India and a more prosperous South Asia. It will also spill over into Central Asia and beyond into the Asia-Pacific region,” she said.

“We encourage India not just to look east, but to engage East and act East as well. ... And its leadership in South and Central Asia is critically important,” Clinton said.

She called for India and its South and Central Asian neighbors to work together to improve standards of living and reduce dependence on outside aid by creating a “new Silk Road” for regional trade, with upgraded border crossings and reduced bureaucratic barriers in order to encourage the free flow of goods.

India, like the U.S., is a steward of the waters from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, Clinton said, and both countries are “deeply invested in shaping the future of the region that they connect.” Leadership from New Delhi has the potential to shape the future of the Asia-Pacific region in a positive way.

“The United States believes that is a very good thing because we believe our visions for the future are very much similar,” she said.

India's democracy can also “inspire others to follow a similar path of openness and tolerance,” Clinton said.

Clinton visited New Delhi July 19 for the second round of the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue; her July 20 visit to Chennai was the first by a sitting U.S. secretary of state.

In Chennai, she urged India to speak out against human rights violations, including in Burma, and to encourage the Burmese government to engage in dialogue with democratic opposition leader Aung San Sui Kyi.

She also said India can help Sri Lanka with its political reconciliation following the defeat of Tamil rebels, and that all Sri Lankans deserve the same hope and opportunities for a better future.

NEW INDIAN PARTNERS FOR CLEAN STOVES INITIATIVE

Following her remarks, Clinton toured an exhibition of clean cooking stoves at the Working Women's Forum in Chennai. The clean cooking stoves are being designed to save lives, improve livelihoods and combat climate change. They are an alternative to traditional stoves, which require a lot of fuel and emit dangerous levels of smoke.

Clinton announced that two major Indian industrial organizations — the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry — have joined the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. The alliance promotes the development and marketing of low-cost, efficient stoves in developing countries, with the goal of seeing 100 million households equipped with the stoves by 2020.

“We will work with people around the world to help develop clean cookstoves, help to manufacture them so they are affordable for you to buy them, and we are delighted that we have partners right here ... to make your lives and the lives of your children better and healthier,” she said.

According to a State Department fact sheet, the two Indian organizations will help to build successful and sustainable cookstove businesses and consumer financing options in India, and develop employment options for women.

The July 20 fact sheet said about 3 billion people worldwide — including 100 million households in India — cook their food on polluting and inefficient stoves whose smoke kills nearly 2 million each year, mainly women and young children. The stoves also increase pressure on local natural resources, such as forests, due to their fuel needs.

The United States has committed more than \$50 million to help the alliance over the next five years, and several U.S. government agencies are directly involved in areas of research, development, testing and training to improve the efficiency and availability of cleaner stoves, the fact sheet said.

U.S. Governors, Chinese Provincial Leaders Discuss Crucial Issues

By MacKenzie C. Babb | Staff Writer

Washington — U.S. governors and Chinese provincial leaders discussed energy, the economy and the environment during the first U.S.-China Governors Forum in Utah.

“The goal of the forum was to foster direct interaction between state and provincial leaders, to promote economic growth and prosperity at the subnational level,” said Reta Jo Lewis, the State Department’s special representative for global intergovernmental affairs. That goal was met, she said, through talks that strengthened mutual understanding, fostered greater cooperation and created new opportunities for trade and investment “on both sides of the Pacific.”

Calling the July 15–17 forum an “excellent platform for exchange and learning,” Lewis said the U.S. and Chinese delegates signed more than 20 agreements pledging continued cooperation on a wide range of issues. The leaders discussed technological, industrial and educational cooperation, as well as green technology, environmental protection and enhancing economic ties.

“Together, these meetings and agreements broadened and deepened the U.S.-Chinese bilateral relationship and cooperation at the subnational level and will lead, we believe, to the creation of more American exports and jobs through greater trade and investment,” Lewis said.

In a July 15 statement, the State Department said the forum was meant not only to encourage state and provincial leaders to share best practices, but also to “formalize relationships between the leaders who are best placed to understand the economic, educational and environmental needs of their respective states and provinces.” The meeting was established by a memorandum of understanding signed by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi during Chinese President Hu Jintao’s visit to Washington in January.

The forum was convened by the National Governors’ Association and the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. Lewis led State Department efforts in facilitating the event, while Governor Christine Gregoire of Washington state led the U.S. delegation to the forum. The Chinese delegation was led by Zhejiang province Party Secretary Zhao Hongzhu.

The State Department, in its July 15 statement, said the United States and China have been cooperating on the subnational level for more than 10 years. In 2010 alone, according to the department, at least eight governors led

trade delegations to China while more than 100 Chinese provincial officials visited the United States.

“U.S. and Chinese state and local governments have established numerous cooperative relationships, including 36 sister provinces and states, 161 pairs of sister-cities, university exchanges, and eco-partnerships on energy and environmental cooperation,” the department said.

Lewis said the more than 20 governors from across the United States and the four provincial Chinese governors who participated in the forum agreed to a visit of U.S. governors to China later in 2011.

Famine Declared; Human Need in Horn of Africa Grows More Urgent

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer

Washington — Two regions of Somalia are suffering from famine, which is not mere hunger, but a formal declaration that hunger now is so severe that more than 30 percent of children are suffering acute malnutrition, more than two people per 100,000 are dying each day, and that food and other basic necessities have become inaccessible to most people.

The July 20 declaration came from the U.N. humanitarian coordinator in Somalia, Mark Bowden. “Every day of delay in assistance is literally a matter of life or death for children and their families in the famine-affected areas,” he said.

In the Somali regions of southern Bakool and Lower Shabelle, acute malnutrition rates are higher than 30 percent, U.N. aid workers have found. Deaths among young children exceed six per 10,000 per day in some areas. In the last few months, tens of thousands of Somalis, the majority of them children, have died from malnutrition and related hardships, according to the U.N. News Centre.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton issued a statement July 20 expressing U.S. concern about the Somali people and the broader humanitarian emergency in the Horn of Africa.

She said the United States has provided \$431 million in food and other emergency assistance to help ease suffering in the region. With an additional allocation July 20, U.S. assistance will reach almost \$460 million. Clinton urged other donors to increase their actions and contributions to assist the region.

“All donors in the international community must commit to taking additional steps to tackle both immediate assistance needs and strengthen capacity in the region to

respond to future crises," Clinton said.

Clinton's statement came less than 24 hours after top officials in U.S. humanitarian activities briefed the press on the growing urgency of the problems through the Horn of Africa, estimating that 11 million people in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya will be affected along with the Somalis. People of these nations have also experienced drought, loss of crops and livestock, and food insecurity.

But Somalia's problems have been further exacerbated by the actions of the insurgent group al-Shabaab, Clinton said.

"In Somalia, 20 years without a central government and the relentless terrorism by al-Shabaab against its own people has turned an already severe situation into a dire one that is only expected to get worse," Clinton said.

The World Health Organization (WHO) unveiled an assessment of health problems in the region July 20 that suggests the situation will grow even more severe. "Reduced food intake and lack of varied diet have led to malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies, resulting in increased morbidity and mortality, particularly from communicable disease."

While many humanitarian agencies are focusing on food shortages, WHO pledged to keep its focus on disease, especially among the very young who are weakened by malnutrition. The Geneva-based health agency will also be setting up disease surveillance systems and improving primary health care services already in place.

U.S. officials also recognize that acute hunger and malnutrition can be the precursor for disease outbreaks. At the July 19 U.S. briefing, U.S. Agency for International Development Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Nancy Lindborg said her agency has studied the history of earlier famine periods in East Africa and elsewhere, finding that ignoring the early signs of disease in these populations can be a huge mistake.

"So it's cholera, it's measles, it's diarrhea, it's all these diseases that we need to effectively address and very quickly enable vaccinations and health treatments to reach," Lindborg said.

The WHO report estimates 710,000 refugees in the region with 1.9 million internally displaced people. These strains have "exhausted the regular coping mechanisms of affected communities," according to WHO. The water and sanitation shortages that frequently arise among populations of this kind are another factor threatening the health of the people of East Africa, WHO said.

White House Statement on Arrest of Goran Hadžić

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
July 20, 2011

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Arrest of Goran Hadzic

The United States welcomes the arrest of Goran Hadzic, who is charged with participation in the murder of hundreds of Croatian civilians, among other crimes, and is the final remaining fugitive indicted for atrocities by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). We congratulate President Tadic and the Government of Serbia for ensuring that the last fugitive indictee of the ICTY will now face justice.

We hope that Goran Hadzic's arrest, coming less than two months after the arrest of fellow indictee Ratko Mladic, can bring some much needed closure to the victims of the crimes committed in Croatia, and their families, and elsewhere in the region. It also serves as yet another reminder to those around the world who carry out terrible crimes that their day, too, will come.

Over the course of its 18-year history, the United States has been and remains a steadfast supporter of the ICTY and its critically important work. The arrests of Mladic and now Hadzic, the final two fugitives out of 161 individuals indicted by the court, will allow the ICTY, and the many professionals who have worked in its chambers, to finally complete their mandate on behalf of the victims and in pursuit of justice.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)