

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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**President Obama Congratulating Nobel Peace Prize Winners**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
October 7, 2011

Statement by the President Congratulating Nobel Peace Prize Winners

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate the recipients of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. Today's award honors three extraordinary individuals, and sends a powerful message that the struggle for universal rights and human dignity can only be fulfilled with the full participation of women around the globe.

President Sirleaf has inspired the world through her journey from a prisoner to the first female President of her country. She has helped Liberia emerge from years of civil war and make great strides toward reconstruction and a democracy that values the contributions of all Liberians, including its women. As a warrior for peace, Leymah Gbowee led her fellow Liberian women as they bravely stood their ground against a brutal dictator in a non-violent struggle to bring peace to their country and realize a full voice for Liberian women. In Yemen, Tawakkul Karman and her fellow women activists were among the first to take to the streets this year to demand their universal rights, and despite the threats and violence waged against peaceful protestors, she has remained a powerful voice for non-violence in a country where guns outnumber people.

Each of this year's Nobel recipients have their own story, but their lives reveal a fundamental truth. Nations are ultimately more successful when all of their citizens can reach their full potential, including women. When women and girls have access to proper health care, families are healthier and communities are less subject to the ravages of disease and hunger. When women and girls have the opportunity to pursue their education and careers of their own choosing, economies are more likely to prosper. And when women assume their rightful place as equals-- in the halls of government, at the negotiating table and across civil society-- governments are more effective, peaceful resolution of disputes are more lasting, and societies are more likely to meet the aspirations of all their citizens.

I commend President Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkul Karman for showing the world that the rights

and voices of half of humanity cannot and will not be denied. And I reaffirm the commitment of the United States to advance the rights and role of women everywhere, in our own country and around the world.

**Secretary Clinton on Female Nobel Peace Prize Winners**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesperson  
October 7, 2011

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY CLINTON

Congratulations to Female Nobel Peace Laureates

I am delighted to send heartfelt congratulations to Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Yemeni activist Tawakkul Karman and Liberian peace activist Leymah Roberta Gbowee for the prestigious honor of sharing this year's Nobel Peace Prize. They are shining examples of the difference that women can make and the progress they can help achieve when given the opportunity to make decisions about the future of their societies and countries.

The unflinching courage, strength and leadership of these women to build peace, advance reconciliation, and defend the rights of fellow citizens in their own countries provide inspiration for women's rights and human progress everywhere. This recognition of their extraordinary accomplishments reflects the efforts of many other women who are promoting peace and security in their countries and communities. I want to commend the Nobel Committee for recognizing the powerful role women are playing in building peace and ending conflict around the world.

**More Exchanges Will Sustain U.S.-Japan Relationship, Secretary Clinton Says**

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer

Washington – The Obama administration wants to see more Japanese youth studying in the United States as well as increased business exchanges and people-to-people ties as a means of maintaining the strong U.S.-Japan alliance well into the future, says Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Clinton spoke October 7 at the annual U.S.-Japan Council conference in Washington. She expressed concern that the number of Japanese students in the United States has dropped by almost 50 percent since 1997, when Japan sent more students to the United States than any other country did.

"We are committed to doing whatever it takes to reverse

this trend," Clinton said.

"Few opportunities deliver the lifelong impressions and friendships as sending our young people to each other's country to learn languages and cultures. And ... [the] simple truth is that these exchanges attract remarkable people and give them a global perspective," she said.

The strongest relationships between Japan and the United States do not exist in government but rather "live in the hearts and minds" of the people and in "the warmth of common experiences, family ties, friendships and the common values that bind us together," Clinton said.

Both countries' responses to Japan's March 11 tsunami and the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States show that "when it counts the most, our two countries stand in solidarity with each other," she said.

To help sustain the ties between the two peoples, the secretary said, the Obama administration is redoubling its efforts to connect Japanese youth with American universities, including the creation of new EducationUSA advising centers throughout Japan that will help Japanese students learn how to obtain university admission and financial assistance.

She said students from areas hit hardest by the tsunami are eligible for new scholarships that will allow them to spend summer 2012 in the United States, and U.S. officials are working to encourage more Americans to study in Japan.

The Obama administration is reaching out to Japanese business leaders to remind them of the value of having employees who know both Japanese and American culture, Clinton said.

"We believe that building this relationship is not only strategic, not only economic, not only political; we believe it is a noble cause, and it's one that we are absolutely committed to. The U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of a system in the Asia-Pacific that has underwritten peace, stability and prosperity for decades," she said.

"Let us teach our young people what our countries have meant, can mean and will mean to each other in the years ahead. And then we can give a new generation the skills, the opportunities and the dream to help America and Japan thrive together in the century ahead," Clinton said.

## **Panetta Cites Progress, Gaps in NATO Defense**

By Cheryl Pellerin | American Forces Press Service

*The following article was originally posted October 6 to the Department of Defense website.*

Brussels – Countries of the NATO alliance must work together to defend common security interests now and in the future, Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta said today.

At his final press conference of the Oct. 5-6 NATO defense ministerial, Panetta summarized key issues, praised the alliance and its success in Afghanistan and Libya, and detailed work that is needed to fill gaps in the alliance's military capabilities.

"Security in the 21st century will not be achieved by each nation marching to its own drummer," the secretary said.

"The fiscal austerity our nations are facing and the pressure these budget constraints are putting on defense spending," he added, "make it all the more essential that we have alliances like NATO."

Joining Panetta in NATO Headquarters' Luns Auditorium were Marine Corps Gen. John R. Allen, commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan, and Navy Adm. James G. Stavridis, supreme allied commander Europe.

In a morning session, the secretary participated in a meeting of ISAF representatives and those of troop-contributing nations to ISAF to discuss the war in Afghanistan.

"General Allen presented a briefing of the situation in Afghanistan to that group, and reviewed the significant progress we've made in NATO's largest effort" and the transition from the coalition to Afghan-led security there, Panetta said.

"It was amazing to look around that room and see all the nations that have contributed," he added. " ... It's one of the largest coalitions that has come together in this kind of effort."

Allen's briefing, Panetta said, made clear that although hard fighting lies ahead before all combat troops are withdrawn from the country by the end of 2014, last year's surge in forces has created the right conditions for transition.

"And we continue to make great strides in developing and strengthening the Afghan National Security Forces," the secretary said.

Panetta sent a strong message to the other ministers, he

said, that despite the drawdown, the United States will maintain important enablers in northern and western Afghanistan -- including medevac teams, helicopters and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support -- that are needed to complete the mission.

"In listening to my fellow ministers, I was struck by their shared commitment to carry forward this mission and to build on the significant progress we've made," he said.

"There is also consensus that we are on the right path, we've made good progress, [and] there are hard times ahead," the secretary added, "but we remain unified in the goal of achieving a stable Afghanistan that can govern and secure itself for the future."

Another session today focused on the effort in Libya, he said, a "remarkable achievement" that is nearing its conclusion with the fall of the Gadhafi regime.

After the ministerial, Panetta travels to Naples, home of the Allied Joint Forces Command, to meet with NATO commanders involved in Libya operations and receive briefings on that effort.

"While this campaign has achieved its goals and demonstrated NATO's effectiveness," Panetta said, "we all must come away from this experience determined to build on these successes and address some of the shortcomings in military capability that were exposed."

A major theme of the ministerial was the need to ensure that NATO has the military capabilities it needs to successfully operate in the 21st century, even in a time of growing budget constraints, the secretary said.

In advance of the NATO Summit in Chicago in May, Panetta said, the alliance must identify, protect and strengthen the core capabilities NATO needs to meet the kind of missions it is most likely to have over the next decade.

An example of such a capability is missile defense, he said.

Yesterday at the ministerial, Panetta and Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero announced that Spain agreed to port four U.S. Aegis ships at Naval Station Rota to support NATO's missile defense system, among other things.

"Alongside important agreements recently concluded with Romania, Poland and Turkey," the secretary said, "this agreement represents a critical step in implementing NATO missile defense."

The Netherlands agreed on Sept. 29 to upgrade radars on

four air defense and commando frigates in support of the missile defense effort.

Another effort addresses the need to bolster NATO capabilities in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, he said.

The Alliance Ground Surveillance program, or AGS, will allow NATO troops to use advanced radar sensors to perform persistent surveillance over wide areas from high-altitude unmanned air platforms.

"Although we have not resolved the issue of how to fund infrastructure and operations costs, I will leave Brussels hopeful that we can reach an agreement to proceed with the program," Panetta said.

Steps have been put in place, he added, that will help the alliance reach an agreement.

"Solving this kind of issue is important not only so that we can move ahead with AGS, but also because it is a crucial symbol of alliance cooperation," he said.

Failure to reach agreement "could hurt the drive for similar cost-effective, multinational approaches -- the kind of smart defense that Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen wants to implement for NATO, he said.

"I appreciate the willingness of my fellow ministers," the secretary said, "to fight together [and] defend our common security interests."

Together, he added, "I believe ... we can build a stronger and more effective alliance for the future."

### **USAID, OSCE Fighting Human Trafficking in Azerbaijan**

Baku, Azerbaijan -- The U.S. Agency for International Development and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe are collaborating to combat human trafficking and improve access to the justice system in Azerbaijan.

Michael Greene, USAID's Azerbaijan mission director, and Koray Targay, head of the OSCE office in Baku, signed a grant agreement September 29.

Under the grant, USAID will support the OSCE's efforts in the security and justice sectors. This will improve coordination and capacity among government and nongovernmental officials to help victims of trafficking and forced labor, and train media to report on this topic. The grant will also fund legal resource centers in Sheki and Lankaran that will provide free legal assistance to the public.

The agreement will finance these activities through September 2013.

U.S. Ambassador Matthew Bryza and Shikhaliyev Javad Suleyman, chief of Azerbaijan's Office on Struggle Against Human Trafficking, attended the signing ceremony. Bryza told attendees that the grant shows that "the United States, in cooperation with the OSCE, is committed to helping our Azerbaijani partners combat this modern-day form of slavery."

Bryza added that the OSCE office in Baku will implement the cooperation with the government of Azerbaijan and civil society, which will contribute significantly to combating human trafficking in Azerbaijan.

"USAID's support for these two projects will enable the government of Azerbaijan to improve its compliance with OSCE commitments," Targay said. "Advancement in the security and justice sectors can help Azerbaijan build on the success of its recent development in the energy sector to create a hospitable environment for pluralistic democracy, human rights and economic prosperity for many years to come."

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