

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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**Joint Statement by President Obama, Czech Prime Minister**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Joint Statement of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

Building on the long friendship between our two countries, we met today to discuss how to strengthen and deepen our bilateral relationship and to examine how we can increase our cooperation in promoting common ideals and interests. The United States and the Czech Republic are NATO allies and partners in numerous joint endeavors in Europe and around the world. We agreed to further develop our relations in three main areas: security cooperation; economic and commercial ties, including civil nuclear energy cooperation; and cooperation in the promotion of democracy, open government and human rights around the world. Toward that end, we identified the following goals:

- Negotiate and sign a reciprocal defense procurement agreement
- Establish a center for civil nuclear cooperation
- Cooperate in the implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative, which could lead to the establishment of an open government and democracy center in Prague

We discussed other important topics, including the global economic situation and energy security. We confirmed our support for safe and secure nuclear power, and agreed that nuclear power is not only important for ensuring energy security, but also for reaching our goals on reducing carbon emissions. We reviewed our cooperation in eastern Afghanistan, where our troops operate closely together in one of the most challenging areas of the country. We agreed that it will be important to maintain sufficient forces and funding during the transition to ensure that the Afghan National Security Forces are in a position to assume lead security responsibility in 2014.

We also reviewed plans for the upcoming NATO summit in Chicago, where we share the belief that the Atlantic Alliance needs to adapt to meet the security challenges of the 21st century. We agreed that we need to be more efficient in the use of our defense resources. Finally, we discussed our cooperation in supporting the transition in the Middle East and North Africa and in promoting democracy, open government and human rights around the world. We agreed that the Czech experience offers a

powerful and compelling example to others struggling to build new democracies of how to conduct a peaceful and inclusive transition to a free and democratic society.

**Secretary Clinton Says Pakistan Also Will Benefit by Pressuring Insurgents**

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer

Washington — As some U.S. lawmakers expressed concern over the relationship between the United States and Pakistan, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton urged Pakistan's civilian and military leadership to shut down terrorist safe havens, put more pressure on violent extremists to stop their incursions into Afghanistan and aid peace efforts in Afghanistan in the interest of regional stability.

In remarks to the House Foreign Affairs Committee October 27, Clinton said Afghan and international coalition forces who are fighting the Taliban, the Haqqani Network and other insurgents are "increasingly concerned ... that we have to go after the safe havens across the border in Pakistan," from where the insurgents can plan and launch their attacks.

"I will be quick to add that the Pakistanis also have reason to be concerned about attacks coming at them from across the border in Afghanistan," Clinton said.

During recent meetings with Pakistani civilian and military officials in Islamabad, Clinton said, she and other U.S. officials have urged Pakistan to "join us in squeezing the Haqqani Network from both sides of the border and in closing safe havens."

"I explained that trying to distinguish between so-called good terrorists and bad terrorists is ultimately self-defeating and dangerous. No one who targets innocent civilians of any nationality should be tolerated or protected," she said.

The Obama administration respects the fact that over the past 10 years more than 5,000 Pakistani soldiers have been killed and tens of thousands of Pakistani citizens have been killed or injured as Pakistan has fought insurgents within its borders. In asking for greater cooperation, "we are not suggesting that Pakistan sacrifice its own security; quite the opposite," Clinton said. "We are pursuing a vision of shared security that benefits us all."

Clinton said the Afghan people "strongly believe reconciliation is still possible" with their country's insurgents, and the United States supports the Afghan government's reconciliation efforts as "the best hope for peace and stability in the region."

"Pakistan has a critical role to play and a big stake in the

outcome, so we look to Pakistan to encourage the Taliban and other insurgents to participate in an Afghan peace process in good faith, both through unequivocal public statements and by closing off the safe havens," Clinton said.

Committee Chairman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida expressed concern over a "cascading series of crises" in the U.S.-Pakistani relationship, including when an employee of the U.S. government shot and killed two Pakistani men whom he believed were robbing him, and the discovery that al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was living near a Pakistani military facility

"Our two countries are at a crossroads. We cannot sustain a partnership with Islamabad if it pursues policies that are hostile to U.S. interests and jeopardize American lives," Ros-Lehtinen said.

Clinton said the Obama administration sees the bilateral relationship as "critical and consequential," saying there is "no solution in the region without Pakistan and no stable future in the region without a partnership."

The United States is trying to find a balance between the realities that insurgents have safe havens inside Pakistan that are allowing them to plan and direct operations that kill Afghans and Americans, and at the same time "we do have a lot of shared interests, particularly in the fight against terrorism."

Ranking committee member Howard Berman of California welcomed the Obama administration's decision to pause its security assistance to Pakistan, but recognized the importance of continuing U.S. economic assistance to the country.

"It is in our long-term interest to support the continued development of Pakistan's civil society and nascent democratic institutions. These are the critical building blocks of a peaceful and prosperous Pakistan, and ultimately a stable Afghanistan and South Asia," he said.

The Pakistani people currently face "constant energy shortages, a never-ending financial crisis, political turmoil and rising extremism," Berman said. While the United States "can't solve all of Pakistan's many problems," it "can make a difference." Berman noted that U.S. funding paid for the recently completed renovation of the Tarbela Dam, which is now providing electricity to 1 million Pakistanis.

#### U.S. COMMITTED TO WITHDRAWING TROOPS IN 2014

In her testimony, Clinton reaffirmed that the United States is committed to withdrawing its forces from

Afghanistan in 2014, based on its agreement with the Afghan government and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Security responsibility has already been transitioned to Afghan forces in some areas, and "we have a plan that our military leadership is implementing to continue to advise and support as Afghans take the lead, but to move away from any kind of ongoing combat responsibility by American or NATO ISAF troops," she said.

Even as security responsibility is handed over, the United States will continue its civilian efforts to support Afghanistan's political and economic development.

"We are working to achieve greater agricultural productivity, greater exploitation in a way that benefits the Afghanistan people of natural resources, increasing exports and strengthening the financial sector," Clinton said, adding "we want to move from aid to trade."

On the political side, Clinton acknowledged that Afghanistan faces severe challenges in moving towards a sustainable, democratic government, since it has never experienced it before, moving from a monarchy to foreign invasion, rule by warlords and the Taliban.

"This is a country that has been through so much," she said.

"We are entering this, I think, with the right dose of humility. I think in the beginning maybe we didn't have enough of that. We didn't know how difficult it would be to make that transition. But we're making progress and we're going to stay with it. And on the civilian side, we'll be with it after 2014," Clinton said.

#### U.S. Economy Continues Expansion

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer

Washington — The U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of 2.5 percent in the July-to-September quarter, driven by consumer spending and continued export growth, though job growth continues to lag, according to the U.S. Commerce Department.

"While the continued expansion is encouraging, faster growth clearly is needed to replace the jobs lost in the recent downturn and to reduce long-term unemployment," Katharine Abraham, a member of President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, said October 27.

The Commerce Department's Bureau of Economic Analysis released the advance estimate of gross domestic product (GDP) for the third quarter of 2011 on October 27. "Real GDP rose 2.5 percent at an annual rate, consistent

with private-sector expectations and up from the 1.3 percent increase in the second quarter and a significant step up from the 0.4 percent gain in the first quarter," the department said.

"In spite of headwinds hitting the U.S. economy, today's GDP report — the ninth straight positive quarter — reflects strong consumer spending and export growth and continued investment by American businesses," Commerce Secretary John Bryson said. "Despite today's encouraging numbers, we must do more to create jobs."

The latest report, which reflects the total value of goods and services produced in the United States, comes as the United States continues recovering from the 2007-2009 global recession and unemployment stays at a rate of 9.1 percent.

"The level of real GDP now exceeds its level at the business-cycle peak in the fourth quarter of 2007," Abraham said.

Notable strength in the third quarter included business investment, which grew at an annual rate of 16.3 percent, Abraham said. Residential construction increased 2.4 percent, and is up 1.6 percent over the past year, the first positive four-quarter change since 2006 except for a brief period when the home buyer tax credit was active.

Other positive contributions to GDP growth included consumer spending, 1.7 percent; fixed investment, 1.6 percent; and net exports, 0.2 percent.

"We are, nonetheless, at a fragile moment in the world economy, and cannot afford to do anything to undermine our economic recovery," Abraham said.

Abraham said the fragile recovery is why the president continues to urge the U.S. Congress to pass legislation aimed at expanding employment in the United States through a series of measures.

"Independent economists say it could increase employment by up to 1.9 million, increase growth and lower the unemployment rate," she said. "This report also underscores the need to put in place a balanced approach to deficit reduction that phases in budget cuts, instills confidence, and allows us to live within our means without shortchanging future growth."

Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, chairman of the congressional Joint Economic Committee, said the preliminary third-quarter report on the economy is a welcome improvement compared with the "extremely slow growth we had in the first half of the year."

"Even so, economic growth is not as strong as we would

like to see, and it is clear that Washington must focus on passing legislation that will provide businesses with the incentives necessary to add employees and help grow our economy," Casey said.

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