

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

*A Weekly Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy*

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**March 30, 2012**

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## World Bank Nominee Calls for "Open, Inclusive World Bank"

29 March 2012

*This op-ed by President Obama's nominee to the World Bank presidency, Dr. Jim Yong Kim, was published in the March 29 issue of the Financial Times and posted on the U.S. Department of the Treasury website. There are no republication restrictions for use by U.S. embassies.*

### My Call for an Open, Inclusive World Bank

By Dr. Jim Yong Kim

We live in a time of historic opportunity. Today more people live in fast-growing economies than at any time in history, and development can take root anywhere – regardless of whether a country is landlocked, just emerging from conflict or oppression, large or small. If we build on this, we can imagine a world in which billions of people in developing countries enjoy increases in their incomes and living standards. Given our collective experiences, successes and resources, it's clear that we can eradicate global poverty and achieve in our lifetimes what for generations has been a distant dream.

My own life and work have led me to believe that inclusive development – investing in human beings – is an economic and moral imperative. I was born in South Korea when it was still recovering from war, with unpaved roads and low levels of literacy. I have seen how integration with the global economy can transform a poor country into one of the most dynamic and prosperous economies in the world. I have seen how investment in infrastructure, schools and health clinics can change lives. And I recognise that economic growth is vital to generate resources for investment in health, education and public goods.

Every country must follow its own path to growth, but our collective mission must be to ensure that a new generation of low and middle-income countries enjoys sustainable economic growth that generates opportunities for all citizens.

As co-founder of Partners in Health and director of the World Health Organisation's initiative to treat HIV/Aids, I will bring practical experience to the World Bank. I have confronted the forces that keep more than 1bn people trapped in poverty. I have worked in villages where fewer than 1 in 10 adults could read or write, where preventable diseases cut lives short and where lack of infrastructure and capital held back entrepreneurs. In all those villages, the local people knew where improvement was needed.

But for change to happen, we need partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society to build

systems that can deliver sustainable, scalable solutions. And as we work for global prosperity, we must draw on ideas and experience from around the globe.

My message is simple: an era of extraordinary opportunity requires an extraordinary global institution. I want to hear from developing countries, as well as those that provide a big share of the resources to development, about how we can together build a more inclusive, responsive and open World Bank.

A more inclusive World Bank will have the resources to advance its core mission of poverty reduction. It will have a governance structure that provides legitimacy and fosters trust and confidence. The Bank has recently achieved a historic capital increase and begun an ambitious programme to modernise its operations. It has also taken important steps to increase the voting power and participation of developing countries. If I am entrusted with the responsibility of leading the World Bank, I shall ensure this continues. If the World Bank is to promote inclusive development, it must give developing nations a greater voice.

A more responsive World Bank must meet the challenges of the moment but also foresee those of the future. The World Bank serves all countries. My focus will be to ensure that it provides a rapid, effective response to their needs. I will come with an open mind and apply my medical and social-science training to take an evidence-based approach.

Finally, a more open World Bank must recognise it does not have all the answers and listen closely to its clients and stakeholders. I have led a world-renowned higher education institution and I will ensure that the World Bank provides a platform for the exchange of ideas. It is already working more closely with a diverse array of partners and it can build on these changes. The Bank has taken significant steps to become more transparent and accountable: it must continue on this path of openness.

Opportunity is nothing without action. In the coming weeks, I look forward to hearing the views of the World Bank's constituents – clients, donors, governments, citizens and civil society – as we forge a common vision to build an even stronger institution, prepared to meet the world's needs in the 21st century.

*(The writer is president of Dartmouth College and the U.S. nominee for the presidency of the World Bank.)*

### Military Observation Flights Bolster Peace in Europe

By Phillip Kurata | Staff Writer | 28 March 2012

Washington – The chief U.S. arms control official has called on former Cold War adversaries to continue

cooperating to improve the effectiveness of military observation flights over each other's territory to minimize the chance of triggering an accidental war.

"Together we have progressed from 'peaceful coexistence' during the Cold War to what I would now call an era of 'peaceful partnership,'" Acting Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller said in Vienna March 27.

She spoke in praise of the 1992 Open Skies Treaty, in which 24 member countries of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact agreed to allow military observation flights over their territory. Quoting former Secretary of State James Baker, Gottemoeller said openness and transparency in military matters is "the most direct path to greater predictability and reduced risk of inadvertent war" and that Open Skies is "potentially the most ambitious measure to build confidence ever undertaken."

The acting under secretary said the treaty could become obsolete if its signatories do not commit sufficient resources and new technologies to keep it effective.

"The biggest single challenge we face for the continued success of the treaty is the future availability of resources. The treaty will only be as good as the states parties [members] make it, so we urge all parties to redouble their efforts to modernize the treaty and allow for the use of new technologies and ensure sufficient assets for future operations," she said.

Gottemoeller said the United States has begun to install digital electro-optical sensors on its observation aircraft, and she urged other treaty members to do likewise "as soon as possible." She said the information gathered with the new technologies should "be used to address a wider range of transnational threats and verification challenges."

Former President Dwight Eisenhower first proposed at the historic Geneva Conference in 1955 that the United States and the former Soviet Union permit each other to send observation flights over the other's territory. His primary concern then was "to relieve the world of the great fear of surprise and devastating attack," as quoted by Gottemoeller.

Former President George H.W. Bush reintroduced the notion in 1989, and the Open Skies Treaty was signed three years later.

Gottemoeller said the Open Skies Treaty works in conjunction with two other agreements – the Vienna Document and the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty – to ease military tensions in Europe.

The Vienna Document, signed in 1999, contains provisions for exchange and verification of military information, such as the size of defense budgets and the location, size and strength of military units, and for observation of military activities.

The Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, signed in 1990, established limits for NATO and the former Warsaw Pact on key categories of conventional military equipment in Europe and mandated the destruction of excess weaponry.

### **Commerce Secretary Promotes Win-Win Partnerships with India**

28 March 2012

Washington – U.S. Commerce Secretary John Bryson is promoting mutually beneficial partnerships between the United States and India to business leaders in New Delhi as part of a trade mission to strengthen bilateral economic ties as the Indian government launches a new \$1 trillion infrastructure project.

"Our goal is to work with leaders like you to bring more prosperity to the world's largest democracy and to build on the strong growth in the overall U.S.-India trade and investment relationship," Bryson said in New Delhi to a round-table discussion on the infrastructure project hosted by the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce March 27.

"If our businesses and governments at all levels work closely together, we can help support India's path toward inclusive growth for all of its people," the secretary said.

He said the new five-year infrastructure plan will dramatically increase connectivity across India and play a key role in supporting the growth of the country's emerging regions and cities.

"We are strongly encouraging businesses across the U.S. to consider the full spectrum of opportunities and partnerships throughout India" and not just in the country's largest cities, Bryson said. To gain a better understanding of the full potential of India's many regions, the secretary scheduled a visit to the growing city of Jaipur March 28.

There, he will deliver keynote remarks to a group of Indian industry representatives about ways to increase bilateral trade that provide "win-win opportunities for the United States and India."

The Commerce Department said in a March 27 statement that before leaving New Delhi, Bryson joined senior government officials, including Minister of Power Sushil Kumar Shinde and Minister of Civil Aviation Ajit Singh,

for meetings that highlighted "U.S. industry's interest in participating in India's infrastructure development and spotlighted investment opportunities in Growth in Emerging Metropolitan Sectors (GEMS) cities involved in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) project."

The department said the GEMS initiative "embraces the notion that export-driven growth will result from small and medium-sized enterprises working with their counterparts in fast-growing 'next-tier' cities in emerging markets like India." The DMIC project is expected to be built between Mumbai and Delhi with a budget of \$90 billion as part of India's "ambitious and admirable" infrastructure plan, according to Bryson.

He said that the U.S.-India relationship is "one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century," and that it is now time to "deepen and broaden that partnership to be more inclusive." Commending cooperation on the new infrastructure project as a way to bring prosperity to more citizens in the United States and India by creating jobs and boosting economies, he said the U.S. government will continue to focus on India as a key partner in growth.

Bryson's five-day trip came after about 15 trade missions conducted by the Commerce Department ranging from clean technology to health care equipment. He was joined by representatives from the Export-Import Bank, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. The delegation also included 16 representatives of U.S. companies specializing in project management, engineering services, transportation and energy.

The group is scheduled to visit Mumbai following the stop in Jaipur, and will return to Washington March 30.

### **President Obama Welcomes Global Cooperation Against Nuclear Terrorism**

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer | 27 March 2012

Washington — Nuclear terrorism is one of the most serious and urgent threats to global security, with the danger that civilians and popular locations can be targeted with a "dirty bomb" or some other nuclear device that could kill hundreds of thousands of people.

President Obama said the more than 50 nations and international organizations meeting in Seoul for the Nuclear Security Summit have committed themselves to "specific and concrete actions" to secure all loose nuclear materials by 2014, and their cooperation is improving the safety of people all over the world.

Speaking March 27 in Seoul, Obama said the international community is fulfilling the commitment it made in 2010 to prevent nuclear material from falling into the hands of

terror groups or criminals within four years.

"We are improving security at our nuclear facilities. We are forging new partnerships. We are removing nuclear materials, and in some cases, getting rid of these materials entirely. And as a result, more of the world's nuclear materials will never fall into the hands of terrorists who would gladly use them against us," he said.

The president said he is encouraged by "the excellent participation" in the summit and the willingness of countries and organizations "not to talk, but to take action," as well as a shared understanding that "no one nation can do this alone."

The threat remains, he said, and there are "still too many bad actors in search of these dangerous materials, and these dangerous materials are still vulnerable in too many places."

But the progress that has been made over the past two years "should fortify our will as we continue to deal with these issues. ... I believe we must, because the security of the world depends on the actions that we take," Obama said.

### **COOPERATION TO SECURE FORMER SOVIET TEST SITE IN KAZAKHSTAN**

At the summit, it was revealed that the United States has been partnering with Russia and Kazakhstan for several years to rehabilitate the Soviet Union's Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in Kazakhstan and secure enough nuclear material to produce the equivalent of 12 nuclear bombs.

In remarks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Seoul March 27, Obama said the operation secured materials that had been vulnerable to potential smugglers and infiltrators and it offers "one of the most significant examples of what we've been doing through this Nuclear Security Summit."

In a separate March 27 press briefing, White House adviser Ben Rhodes said that although the more than 40 tunnels at the testing site had been sealed in 2000, scavenger activity became apparent in the years that followed, and "this, coupled with our focus on nuclear terrorism, led to the launch of this trilateral effort ... so that there couldn't be the theft of the residual nuclear material at the site."

Rhodes said over the past several years, "Kazakhstani work crews used U.S.-provided equipment to access the suspected areas based on Russian data to get at the material of concern."

"This is a type of project that demonstrates how three

different countries can work together to eliminate a nuclear threat. ... We were able to reach the goal of being able to announce today that we're wrapping up the project," he said.

Rhodes said the task of securing the world's loose nuclear material is "a solvable problem" that requires coordinated action, and the summit serves to gather heads of state to agree to take action and sign on to cooperative efforts.

"Different countries have different challenges. For some, it's the challenge of disposing of nuclear materials. For some, it's a challenge of increasing security at their nuclear facilities. For others, it's joining on to cooperative efforts to crack down on smuggling," he said.

Shawn Gallagher, the National Security Council's director for nuclear threat reduction, outlined a number of other actions countries have taken to prevent materials from falling into the wrong hands. He said, "It really shows that countries are coming together and realizing that they need to work together to solve this problem — not something any single nation is going to be able to do on their own."

According to Gallagher's remarks and several facts sheets released by the White House:

- The United States and Russia have agreed to eliminate 17,000 nuclear weapons' worth of plutonium over the next several years.
- Ukraine, Mexico and most recently Sweden have eliminated all of the nuclear material they had agreed to eliminate.
- Belgium, which will host the next Nuclear Security Summit, has announced it will work with the United States to eliminate its excess highly enriched uranium and plutonium by 2014.
- The United States announced an agreement with Belgium, the Netherlands and France to supply highly enriched uranium for European medical isotopes over the next two years in order to provide a supply for cancer and heart disease patients as European medical facilities transition away from using highly enriched uranium.
- Georgia and Moldova have taken action to seize highly enriched uranium on the black market to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands; Jordan has also announced it is creating a counter-nuclear-smuggling team.

"We're linking all of these teams together and these national capabilities together as sort of a worldwide law enforcement and intelligence fusion of information and capabilities to really take concrete actions to break up the black market," Gallagher told reporters.

## Asians Are Fastest-Growing Racial Group in U.S.

By Phillip Kurata | Staff Writer | 27 March 2012

Washington — U.S. residents of Asian descent were the fastest-growing segment by race of the U.S. population in the first decade of the 21st century, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

A bureau report released in March said people in the U.S. population who trace 100 percent of their origins back to Asia numbered 14.7 million in the 2010 census, while people who said their Asian heritage was mixed with one or more other races numbered 2.6 million. Combined, the two categories totaled 17.3 million, accounting for 5.6 percent of the U.S. population. Their numbers grew by 45.6 percent from 2000 to 2010, compared to 9.7 percent growth for the overall population.

The bureau defines the U.S. Asian population as people who say their roots extend entirely or partially back to the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent, including — for example — Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, North or South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

Asians in the United States are faring well economically, by and large. The median household income for single-race Asians was nearly \$69,000 in 2010, compared to the \$52,000 U.S. national average. Asian communities in the United States reported a range of incomes, including a median annual income of more than \$90,000 among Indian households and less than \$47,000 for Bangladeshi households.

In terms of educational attainment, a high percentage of U.S. Asians go to university. The bureau reports that 50 percent of people at least 25 years old who identify themselves as single-race Asians have a bachelor's degree. The percentage for the overall U.S. population is 28 percent. Twenty percent of the same category have gone on for more advanced degrees, such as master's, doctorates or professional degrees. This is double the percentage of the total U.S. population that has advanced degrees.

Within the U.S. Asian community, the Chinese were the largest subgroup, numbering 4.0 million, followed by Filipinos (3.4 million) and Indians (3.2 million). These three groups accounted for 60 percent of the single-race Asian category. The fastest-growing subgroup among U.S. Asians was the population from the tiny Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. There were about 200 Bhutanese living in the United States in 2000; their number expanded to more than 19,000 by 2010. Still, the Bhutanese population remains one of the smaller Asian subgroups in the United States.

Where have the Asians in the United States settled? The Census Bureau says that Asian population in every state except Hawaii grew by at least 30 percent, with the most growth occurring in Nevada (116 percent), Arizona (95 percent), North Carolina (94 percent), North Dakota (85 percent), and Georgia (83 percent). But the U.S. Asian population is not evenly distributed across the country. Nearly three-fourths of all Asians live in just 10 states — California, New York, Texas, New Jersey, Hawaii, Illinois, Washington, Florida, Virginia and Pennsylvania, the bureau reported.

What does the future hold for the Asian population in the United States? The Census Bureau projects that the number of U.S. residents who identify themselves as Asian or Asian in combination with one or more other races will rise to 40.6 million by the 21st century's midpoint, making up 9 percent of the U.S. population.

### **Reporters Band Together, or Not, to Uncover Corruption**

By Andrzej Zwanecki | Staff Writer | 27 March 2012

Washington — In 2010, seven reporters based in Eastern Europe and the United States set out to report on offshore tax havens. The investigative effort was put together by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), a network of investigative journalists and media outlets in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Posing as businessmen looking to evade taxes, the journalists discovered an entire industry catering to criminals, corrupt businesspeople and politicians willing to use offshore havens as fronts for money laundering, tax evasion, and drug and weapons smuggling.

The seven reporters are among hundreds of journalists around the world who stick their noses into matters that others cannot or do not want to look into. Relying on undercover work and sources who prefer to remain anonymous, they expose political cover-ups, shady business practices and corruption of different sorts.

David Kaplan believes that investigative journalism works particularly well as a deterrent to bribery and misuse of public funds. Kaplan is an investigative reporter and editor-at-large for the OCCRP.

"So much corruption can be stopped just by knowing someone is looking over your shoulder," Kaplan said at a presentation in Washington of a study on media coverage of corruption.

But in some countries, exposing corruption through the media can be dangerous. Anti-corruption reporters are often hunted, harassed, beaten, detained or killed. One-fifth of the 812 journalists murdered between 1992 and

2010 had been working on stories "strictly about corruption," according to the study by Rosemary Armao, a former reporter and a professor of journalism at the State University of New York at Albany.

Yet, despite intimidation, investigative journalists are on the forefront of the fight against corruption. In 2007–2011, among eight winners of the Integrity Award bestowed by Transparency International on distinguished anti-corruption activists were three journalists.

### LONE WOLVES

Traditionally investigative reporters are the "lone wolf" type of operators," said Gerard Ryle, director of the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ). The fewer the number of people who know about the story a journalist is working on, the less chance that the wrong people find out about it — and the better chance that the story gets published, Ryle said. Many individual reporters uncover corruption and other criminal activities on their own, including Attotage Prema Jayantha in Sri Lanka and David Leigh in the United Kingdom.

Such journalists can find allies among governmental reformers, citizen activists, businessmen seeking fair competition and nongovernmental groups such as Transparency International and the Open Society Foundation. But writers are most effective "when they work independently," according to Armao.

"They need to be free to pursue investigations wherever they may lead without worrying about entanglements or alliances between their 'partners' and the targets of their work," she said.

Partners can help journalists by supplying information, suggesting sources, supporting their work and, in many cases, defending their findings against government or business denials. That is, if their help comes with no conditions, Armao said.

### ALL TOGETHER NOW?

Banding together, though, Ryle said, has advantages for investigative reporters. It "gives you a protection of a group and allows you to get advice from more experienced people," he said. That is why his organization encourages collaboration among journalists from different countries.

"But you should look at it on a case-by-case basis," Ryle said.

ICIJ teams of three to 20 reporters have exposed smuggling by multinational tobacco companies and

investigated private military cartels, asbestos companies and climate-change lobbyists. For a project on tobacco smuggling, the consortium partnered with the OCCRP fresh from the success of its offshore crime story. Just weeks after its publication in 2011, a high-profile tax-evasion consultant exposed in the report was arrested and charged and his associate was forced to halt operations.

### **U.S. Anti-Drug Strategy Based on Science, Compassion**

By Lauren Monsen | Staff Writer | 26 March 2012

Washington — President Obama's strategy for reducing U.S. demand for illegal drugs represents a modern approach based on science, research and compassion, says Rafael Lemaitre of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

In a March 23 interview, Lemaitre explained that recent advances in brain research greatly enhance scientists' understanding of the nature of drug addiction. These advances, he said, have played a major role in shaping the president's anti-drug policy.

Until fairly recently, there were two prevailing and diametrically opposed theories on how to deal with drug addicts, Lemaitre said.

"The old way of thinking about the drug problem was divided into two camps. One camp said, 'Lock them in prison and throw away the key,' while the other camp said, 'Legalize drugs.'" However, "decades of science and research tell us that both approaches are wrong."

"Science now tells us that drug addiction is a disease of the brain," Lemaitre said. Moreover, "it's a preventable disease, and it's treatable."

While law enforcement is an essential component of the president's policy, "it doesn't make much sense to have a law-enforcement-only approach," Lemaitre said. "The point is to break the cycle of drug use, arrest and incarceration."

#### **PREVENTION AND TREATMENT PROGRAMS**

"It's much cheaper to prevent and treat drug abuse" than to lock up offenders repeatedly, Lemaitre said.

"Every dollar invested in prevention measures reduces costs associated with drug abuse by about \$18," he said. "That's why you're seeing such an emphasis in this administration on prevention and treatment. We spent over \$10 billion last year on domestic prevention and treatment efforts, compared to almost \$6 billion on interdiction and international drug-control programs. We're really serious about this."

Lemaitre cited U.S. drug-court programs as "one of the most important programs we support" in reducing domestic demand for illicit drugs. Drug courts, which place low-level drug offenders in treatment instead of in jail, "have been shown to reduce recidivism dramatically." A drug court "saves taxpayer money and, most importantly, it saves lives."

He also hailed the success of coalition-style programs that seek to create drug-free communities: "We've funded 726 local community programs across the United States. They help reduce drug use by educating kids about the dangers of drug use."

#### **ONGOING RESEARCH**

Lemaitre pointed to cutting-edge research by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), which is a subsidiary of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH).

"Eighty-five percent of the world's research on drug abuse is conducted by NIH's National Institute on Drug Abuse," he said. "We share this information with our international partners, and a lot of it is online."

He praised the work of Mexican-born Nora Volkow, the research psychiatrist and scientist who serves as director of NIDA. Volkow pioneered the use of brain imaging to investigate the toxic effects of drugs and their addictive properties, and she was instrumental in demonstrating that drug addiction is a disease of the human brain.

"We have to have a public-health approach" to reducing drug abuse, Lemaitre said. "Conventional wisdom says we've been at this for 30 years with no progress, but that's not true. The rate of drug use in the United States has declined by about 30 percent since 1979 — the peak year for drug use. Since 2006, the rate of cocaine use in the United States has dropped nearly 40 percent, and methamphetamine use is down by about one-half."

"We spend about \$1 billion every year on research at NIH on drug abuse, and we have a strong commitment to foreign partners" to help fight international drug rings by reducing U.S. drug consumption, Lemaitre said. "Science, research and compassion drive the president's drug strategy, and it's the right approach."

### **President Obama, South Korea's Lee Discuss Regional Security, Global Economy**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer | 25 March 2012

Washington — President Obama and Korean President Lee Myung-bak discussed a range of issues affecting the United States and the Republic of Korea, including a recently signed free trade agreement, the global economy,

regional issues and North Korea.

“My visits to Korea reflect the leadership role that South Korea is playing in this region and around the world – a ‘Global Korea,’” Obama said during a joint press conference March 25 with Lee at the Blue House in Seoul. Obama is in Seoul for a two-day meeting of the second Nuclear Security Summit, which is scheduled to begin March 26.

Earlier in the day, Obama visited U.S. troops stationed at the demilitarized zone that has separated North and South Korea since the end of the Korean War in 1953. Obama also had a nearly two-hour private meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at which they discussed issues in the Middle East involving Syria and Iran among a range of security issues.

More than 50 nations and several international organizations will attend the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, which will focus on nuclear nonproliferation and efforts by nations to prevent nuclear weapons and the materials to make them from falling into the hands of terrorists and extremist groups. The first summit was held in Washington in 2010.

Obama noted that Ukraine has announced it has completed removal of highly enriched uranium from its territory, which had been a long-term goal of the East European nation. “This fulfills a commitment Ukraine made at our last Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, and I believe it’s a preview of the kind of progress we’re going to see over the next two days in confronting one of the most urgent challenges of global security – securing the world’s nuclear weapons and preventing nuclear terrorism,” Obama said.

The president also said his visit to South Korea reflects the goal that the United States has for leadership again in the Asia-Pacific, a region that will affect American security and prosperity in the 21st century. “And the cornerstone of our efforts is our strong alliances, including our alliance with the Republic of Korea,” he said. The United States and South Korea are modernizing their security alliance.

Obama announced that the foreign ministers and defense ministers of the United States and South Korea will meet in June to discuss “concrete measures we can take to continue strengthening that alliance. We’re on track for South Korea to assume operational control for the alliance in 2015.”

On North Korea (DPRK), Obama said that nation's announced intention to conduct a long-range missile launch will achieve nothing. “North Korea knows its obligations, and it must take irreversible steps to meet

those obligations. On this, the United States and the Republic of Korea are absolutely united,” he said.

In February, North Korea agreed to a series of steps, including a moratorium on long-range missile launches, Obama said. But early in March, leaders in North Korea announced an intention to conduct a missile launch. President Lee said at the press conference that such a launch would be a direct violation of North Korea's commitments and its international obligations. South Korea, the United States and other nations have been working to convince North Korea to forego a nuclear weapons development program and eliminate nuclear programs from the Korean Peninsula.

“It would only deepen North Korea’s isolation, damage further its relations with its neighbors and seriously undermine the prospect of future negotiations,” Obama said.

Lee and Obama also praised the newly enacted free trade agreement between the United States and South Korea, which entered into force on March 15. Obama said it is an economic win for the United States and South Korea – creating more jobs and opportunities in both nations.

Lee told reporters that he and Obama “exchanged views on the state of the global economy and shared our concern regarding the uncertainties that still remain. In particular, we share the concern that rising oil prices is an obstacle to speedy recovery of the global economy, and agree that international cooperation needed to be further strengthened to bring about stability in the world oil market.”

Obama and Lee also discussed the Middle East, Afghanistan and Iran and how to increase international cooperation to bring about a resolution of these and other issues.

### **Weather-Forecasting Cooperation Promotes Global Well-Being**

23 March 2012

Washington – The U.S. National Weather Service (NWS) is working with like-minded weather watchers all over the globe to monitor Earth’s weather systems, make better forecasts and provide the global community with accurate information to protect life and property from atmospheric hazards.

NWS cites its involvement with like-minded weather watchers in a statement recognizing World Meteorological Day, March 23. The date marks the 1950 creation of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a U.N. agency with 189 nation-members. WMO’s work is focused on weather, climate, hydrology and

related sciences such as oceanography and atmospheric chemistry.

WMO plays “a vital role by facilitating cooperation between countries to collect and share weather data internationally,” according to the statement from NWS Director Jack Hayes. “Global cooperation for weather, water and climate services is a continuing, evolving, growing and necessary interaction that has supported tremendous improvements in forecast accuracy over recent decades and has supported the shared goal of our global community for personal, societal and economic well-being.”

NWS highlights a variety of data-sharing projects conducted with international partners:

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the NWS parent agency, serves as the regional meteorological center for the Atlantic Basin and parts of the Pacific. In exchange for data from the countries in these hurricane-prone regions, NOAA issues regional hurricane information and products that benefit all the countries affected by these storms.
- NOAA has partnerships with countries, including Australia and South Korea, to collaborate on maintenance for critical ocean-observing networks, such as tsunami-detection systems.
- NOAA and other WMO members recently adopted a resolution encouraging member states to step up protection of ocean-observation platforms, such as buoys, from intentional or unintentional damage. An NWS summary says this decision will protect the ocean-observing systems that provide data for essential forecasts of tsunamis, severe weather, hurricanes and daily information needed for shipping.

For its part, the WMO is focusing on “Powering our future with weather, climate and water” on World Meteorological Day. The Geneva-based organization is highlighting the critical roles of weather, climate and water services in powering a sustainable future.

“Our food and farming supply must be tailored to the climate of a region and the available water. Industrial processes need ample water and energy. Cities need clean air and protection from storms and floods. International trade and tourism depend on safe and efficient transportation,” according to WMO materials.

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