

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## Treasury's Lew Urges Support of IMF Reform

By Kathryn McConnell | Staff Writer | 12 December 2013

Washington — U.S. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew again has urged Congress to approve reforms for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that will enhance the fund's ability to represent all of its 188 members and make its governing structure reflect today's global economy.

In May, the House of Representatives and the Senate rejected the request as too politically sensitive in the tense budget environment in Washington at the time. U.S. approval is the last step needed for the reform to go into effect, Lew told the House Committee on Financial Services December 12.

Once the reform package is approved and implemented by the three-fifths of the IMF member countries that have 85 percent of the total voting power, "it will result in an unprecedented 100 percent increase in total quotas and a major realignment of quota shares," the IMF says. Quotas are what each member country pays to support the work of the IMF.

Reforms to modernize the IMF were secured at the 2010 summit of the world's 20 major economies. The reforms would preserve the U.S. veto at the IMF and leave the overall U.S. commitment to the fund unchanged, Lew said.

"To be effective, the IMF must be seen as representing the interests of all its 188 member countries. For this reason, it is crucial that its governance structure reflect today's world economy," IMF states in a fact sheet. The fund says the reforms would shift 9 percent of quota shares to dynamic emerging markets and developing countries.

Lew said the 2008-2009 global financial crisis demonstrated the need for strengthening financial-sector regulation across the globe. "In particular," he said, "the crisis highlighted the need for building much stronger and more resilient financial institutions, greater market transparency, and a high-quality level playing field across borders that protects against regulatory gaps, arbitrage, and a race to the bottom."

"The IMF, the World Bank and the [multilateral development banks] have proven to be effective pillars of the international financial architecture," Lew said. He said the development banks are making long-term investments "to help foster the next generation of emerging markets."

"Our investments in these institutions foster a more stable and vibrant global economy, which is critical to a growing

U.S. economy," Lew testified. "That is why it is so important that Congress acts to approve IMF quota and governance reform."

Lew said that although growth has slowed in some emerging economies, the IMF is still advising governments to improve their policy frameworks and build greater resilience through exchange rate flexibility, supportive monetary policies consistent with inflation and strengthened regulatory and supervisory policies.

He said that in fiscal year 2014 the United States will make new commitments to the International Development Association of the World Bank and to the African Development Fund, the two largest sources of finances for the world's poorest countries.

Lew also said that as the United States and other advanced economies return to normal as growth strengthens, emerging markets will need to make reforms "that increase their resilience and address structural constraints to growth."

## USAID, Partners Award Power Agriculture Innovators

By Kathryn McConnell | Staff Writer | 12 December 2013

Washington — The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and four of its partners named two innovative organizations the top winners of their global challenge to design clean energy solutions that have the potential to transform the way farmers and agriculture-related businesses in the developing world feed their countries.

"Today's winning ideas prove that we can change the landscape of what is possible in development," said USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah.

Denver-based IDE, formerly known as International Development Enterprises, and the Earth Institute at Columbia University in New York received Powering Agriculture Grand Challenge awards December 11 at USAID headquarters in Washington. Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development is sponsored by USAID, the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Duke Energy and the governments of Sweden and Germany. The challenge was launched in June 2012.

Powering Agriculture is part of USAID's approach to promoting climate-smart agriculture, or "agriculture that sustainably increases productivity and climate change resilience, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and enhances national food security and development goals all at the same time," USAID senior adviser Kit Batten said at the award ceremony. Powering Agriculture aims

to expand clean energy solutions in areas like irrigation, food processing and storage and to enhance the incomes of small farmers and farm businesses, USAID said.

“As much as 50 percent of crops grown in Africa are lost simply because farmers can’t safely process or move their harvests,” said Shah. “This is a big problem around the world. It is more dire when you consider the world will need to produce 70 percent more food on the same amount of productive land in order to feed growing populations,” he said.

Shah added that “no element of agriculture is more essential and no resource is more precious than water.” He emphasized that every day 800 million farmers have to manually lift and haul water to irrigate their fields, “wasting time, energy and – critically – water.”

IDE’s irrigation system can run on either steam or solar power and is competitive with diesel in terms of cost and results, Shah explained. The nonprofit works with local manufacturers to make the pumps commercially available in Honduras, Nepal and Zambia, he said.

Working in Senegal, Earth Institute enables a small group of farmers to use a central solar energy unit to power multiple pumps for irrigation. The approach defrays the individual user’s cost. The solar power can be accessed through prepaid electricity cards sold in local shops, Shah said. Over the next three years, Earth Institute expects to install three of the microsolar energy system across Senegal, he said.

At the award event, Powering Agriculture also recognized 10 other innovative organizations for their designs:

- Camco Advisory Services (Benin and Tanzania) produces sustainable, portable, carbon neutral and cost-effective energy from crop waste. The energy can be used for fruit drying; coconut, coffee and coca processing; soap production; hulling and parboiling rice; processing lumber; purifying water and pasteurization.
- EarthSpark International (Haiti) developed a microgrid powered 90 percent by photovoltaic electricity that provides electricity for processing agricultural products with longer shelf life.
- ECO Consult (Jordan) developed an integrated model of hydroponic and solar-powered farming that uses dramatically less water than conventional farming. It gives farmers in water-scarce regions the opportunity to increase their income while reducing water use.
- Motivo Engineering (India) provides electricity storage and transformation units that can connect to solar panels,

wind turbines, water turbines and formal electricity grids to dramatically increase agricultural productivity.

- African Bamboo (Ethiopia) is an environmentally friendly thermal modification process that can virtually eliminate such decay factors as rot, insects and warping while yielding a stable, fast-growing, and ecofriendly substitute for wood materials.
- SunDanzer Refrigeration (Kenya) offers a solar-powered cold chain solution that chills milk immediately at collection centers before the milk is shipped to dairy processors.
- Promethean Power Systems (India) developed a thermal energy battery pack that fully charges on solar power or a few hours of grid electricity to provide cold-chain storage around the clock.
- University of Georgia Research Foundation (Uganda) uses cow manure as a renewable-energy source to power milk coolers to expand farmers’ marketable dairy products at a low cost and with little complexity.
- REbound Technology (Mozambique) designed an off-grid solar refrigeration system that reliably removes field heat without consistent, high-cost electrical supply.
- Experience International (Indonesia) offers a low-cost, solar powered solution that virtually eliminates costly and frequent maintenance for cold storage and ice making near fishing ports.

All groups were chosen from 475 submissions. More than half of the designs submitted were from developing countries. The 12 groups will share \$13 million in funding, according to USAID.

### **Nuclear Deal Will Protect U.S. Security, Contain Iran**

11 December 2013

Washington — Secretary of State John Kerry is urging congressional leaders to allow diplomacy to work and let an international agreement on Iran’s nuclear development move forward as negotiated by the six participating nations.

“We’re at one of those, really, hinge points in history,” Kerry said in testimony before the House of Representatives’ Foreign Affairs Committee on December 10. “One path could lead to an enduring resolution in the international community’s concerns about Iran’s nuclear program. The other path could lead to continued hostility and, potentially, to conflict.”

The five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, Germany and the European Union have been

involved in discussions with Iran to contain its nuclear program since 2006. A turning point came in late November, when negotiators emerged from a Geneva meeting with what the White House described as some initial understandings to halt the progress of Iran's nuclear program. The agreement will reverse the program in several respects that are important to the nations that oppose the expansion of nuclear capabilities by Iran.

In return, the United States, Russia, China, France, Germany and the United Kingdom agreed to ease U.N.-imposed sanctions against Iranian oil sales, offering the opportunity for economic relief.

That concession has been met with skepticism from some U.S. lawmakers, who called Kerry to Capitol Hill for further discussion about the deal.

Preventing the development of a nuclear weapon by Iran is a key element of Obama administration foreign policy, Kerry emphasized. This agreement serves that end and protects the security interests of the United States.

The agreement "provides unprecedented monitoring and inspections" of Iran's nuclear program, Kerry said. "We will have increased transparency of Iran's nuclear program, giving us a window into their activities that we don't have today," he added.

International weapons inspectors will have access to Iranian nuclear facilities to which they have had very limited or no access in the past. The deal calls for inspection opportunities at the Fordow, Natanz and Arak facilities, Kerry noted, which will give the international community "extraordinary ability" to monitor whether Iran is freezing and reversing some aspects of its nuclear program as agreed.

The parties to the agreement are unified in the position that "we will not undo the sanctions and that we will stay focused on their enforcement," Kerry said.

Critics of the deal have put forth what Kerry described as "outlandish numbers" regarding the sanction relief that the agreement offers Iran. Estimates by the U.S. intelligence community and the Treasury Department indicate that the sanction relief will be approximately \$7 billion, Kerry said, if Iran complies with the agreement.

"We are structuring this relief in a way that it is tied to concrete, [International Atomic Energy Agency]-verified steps that they've agreed to take on the nuclear program," Kerry said.

The secretary of state recalled his earlier service as a U.S. senator, when he supported the imposition of tough sanction on Iranian oil sales. The fact that negotiators

have reached this agreement proves the sanctions have worked, Kerry said. Now the United States must uphold its end of the deal to ease those economic constraints.

Some critics of the deal have proposed even further sanctions since it was unveiled in November. As Kerry urged the House Foreign Affairs Committee against such action, the Obama administration gained ground on the issue in the U.S. Senate.

The chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, Tim Johnson of South Dakota, backed away from proposals for further sanctions, according to news reports. Johnson was quoted as saying that the Obama administration has "made a case for a pause in congressional action on new Iran sanctions."

The agreement is an initial understanding with a six-month expiration. Since re-evaluation will occur at that time, "general parameters of a comprehensive solution that would constrain Iran's nuclear program over the long term" are being discussed, according to a White House statement.

### **Company Joins Global Equality Fund for LGBT Rights**

11 December 2013

Washington — Consulting company Deloitte LLP joined the U.S. State Department's Global Equality Fund on December 10, International Human Rights Day.

The Global Equality Fund was launched in December 2011 to support civil society's efforts to advance and protect the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons around the world, the State Department said in a press release.

The State Department describes the Global Equality Fund as "a collaborative effort ... which will bridge government, companies, and civil society organizations with the shared objective of creating an environment in which LGBT persons can live freely and without discrimination."

The fund has provided more than \$7.5 million to civil society in more than 50 countries. It provides organizations and human rights defenders with emergency assistance in response to threats or harassment; builds organizational capacity for human rights documentation, advocacy, legal reform and organizational development; and provides support to combat negative social attitudes and societal discrimination.

Deloitte joins the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); the governments of Denmark,

Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden; and the Arcus Foundation, the John D. Evans Foundation, the Norwegian LGBT Organisation and the MAC AIDS Fund as collaborators with the Global Equality Fund.

"Deloitte's contribution will help the Global Equality Fund continue to provide critical emergency and long-term assistance to advance and protect the human rights of LGBT persons around the world," the State Department said.

### **President Obama Reflects on Life and Legacy of Nelson Mandela**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer |  
10 December 2013

Washington — President Obama praised the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela, who struggled to bring social justice and democracy to his beloved nation and influenced the world in ways few other leaders achieve.

"Born during World War I, far from the corridors of power, a boy raised herding cattle and tutored by the elders of his Thembu tribe, Madiba would emerge as the last great liberator of the 20th century," Obama said of Mandela at a memorial service in Johannesburg on December 10.

Obama compared Mandela, who was imprisoned for 27 years by the former apartheid government, to some of the greatest social justice advocates of the 19th and 20th centuries.

"Like Gandhi, he would lead a resistance movement — a movement that at its start had little prospect for success. Like Dr. King, he would give potent voice to the claims of the oppressed and the moral necessity of racial justice," Obama said.

"He would endure a brutal imprisonment that began in the time of Kennedy and Khrushchev and reached the final days of the Cold War. Emerging from prison, without the force of arms, he would, like Abraham Lincoln, hold his country together when it threatened to break apart," Obama said.

Mandela, Obama said, like the men who founded the United States, would build a constitutional order to preserve freedom for future South African generations and embrace democracy and the rule of law. Mandela became the first elected black president of South Africa in 1994 as the apartheid era ended.

Mandela taught the world the power of action, the power of ideas, the importance of reason and arguments, the need to study those you agree with and those you don't,

Obama said. And Mandela understood that ideas cannot be constrained by a prison's walls nor be extinguished by a sniper's bullet. Mandela also fully understood the power of the human spirit.

"There is a word in South Africa — Ubuntu — a word that captures Mandela's greatest gift: his recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye, that there is oneness to humanity, that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others and caring for those around us," Obama said.

First lady Michelle Obama, former President George W. Bush and his wife Laura, former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and former President Jimmy Carter also attended the memorial service.

Mandela died December 5 at his Johannesburg home surrounded by his family. He was 95. A state funeral will be held December 15 in Mandela's ancestral village of Qunu in the Eastern Cape province.

### **State Dept. Lists Finalists for Corporate Excellence Award**

09 December 2013

Washington — The State Department's Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs December 6 announced the selection of 12 finalists for the Secretary of State's 2013 Award for Corporate Excellence (ACE).

An interagency committee chaired by the State Department chose the 12 U.S. companies from 42 nominations submitted by U.S. ambassadors around the world. The finalists for 2013 include the following:

- **Apache Corporation in Egypt**, for this hydrocarbon exploration and production company's contribution to combating illiteracy and providing accessible and safe education annually for approximately 7,000 underserved girls and young women, by building and maintaining 200 schools throughout the country.
- **Ball Corporation in Serbia**, for this metal can producer's development of a youth education program focused on recycling and environmental awareness; partnering with a local financial institution to foster the development of local independent beverage producers, by minimizing startup costs; and raising employee awareness of ethical business conduct in relation to suppliers, labor, transparency and combating bribery.
- **Boeing in China**, for this aircraft manufacturer's partnering with universities to fund scholarships for science, technology, engineering and mathematics students; implementation of the "Soaring with Your

Dream" project to teach 55, 000 students about the principles of flying; and collaboration with Chinese airlines, the Civil Aviation Administration of China and other industry players to provide enhanced professional training to thousands of Chinese aviation professionals.

- **Citibank in Brazil**, for this financial services company's investment of \$1.2 million in partnerships with local civil society groups to fund projects for increasing the purchasing power and financial inclusion of low-income Brazilians; launching of a risk management system for loans to medium-size enterprises, based on the sustainability of businesses practices and compliance with Brazil's labor standards; and creating a microcredit program to fund small businesses and a women's council to promote career advancement for female employees.

- **Coca-Cola in Romania**, for this beverage producer's partnership with local civil society organizations and government to provide environmental conservation through the United Nations Development Programme-endorsed "Adopt a River" project; collaboration with a host-country supermarket chain to offer environmental protection education to children; and sponsoring environmental sustainability programs focusing on recycling of beverage containers.

- **Dole in Ecuador**, for this banana producer's efforts to increase employment opportunities for women through the construction of children's day care centers and the sponsorship of workshops to promote gender equality and reduce domestic violence; to recycle water and use sustainably produced wood; to initiate a water, sanitation and hygiene program that makes clean drinking water available to 2,000 persons; to offer financial training and launch a microenterprise project for underserved women; and to operate schools for hundreds of children.

- **Esso in Angola**, for prioritizing the hiring of local citizens, including for company management positions; investing millions of dollars for technical and safety training for local employees; instituting an anti-malaria program to protect and educate workers; and partnering with the Angolan government to vaccinate thousands of children and to undertake conservation programs to protect endangered wildlife.

- **Fruit of the Loom in Honduras**, for this garment manufacturer's forging of a groundbreaking collective bargaining agreement with its workers, which has become a model for the Central America region; recognition of unions and adoption of a union-neutral policy at all of its assembly facilities in Honduras; providing 10,000 health screenings for persons; and engaging in environmental stewardship through reducing carbon emissions and providing ecological stoves to rural areas.

- **Mars in Indonesia**, for this confectionary producer's contributions to local communities and their environment through providing seed capital to women's groups to start businesses, and technology and skills to thousands of small farmers to increase their cocoa yields and income; developing models for sustainable cocoa farming through reduced land use; and undertaking programs to restore damaged coral reefs and reverse unsustainable fishing.

- **Plantronics in Mexico**, for this electronic device manufacturer's support for host-country technology and science development through establishing a center and sophisticated testing lab employing 100 professionals; agreements with local colleges and trade schools to provide work-school collaboration assistance, intern opportunities and recruitment; and undertaking preventive health initiatives for approximately 2,200 persons.

- **Taylor Guitars in Cameroon**, for this musical instrument manufacturer's environmentally and socially responsible sourcing, harvesting and milling of rare ebony, including through its efforts to conserve ebony stocks by raising consumer awareness; enhancing local incomes by hiring workers from local communities to identify timber for sourcing; training workers to use state-of-the-art milling equipment; and encouraging the host-country government to undertake law and policy reforms directed at transparency and traceability of logging permits, and respect for the rights and needs of other forest users.

- **VOS Flips in Guatemala**, for this footwear manufacturer's provision of 20,000 pairs of free shoes to needy persons in Guatemala; implementation of a code of conduct to combat child labor in its natural rubber sourcing supply chain; efforts to obtain all of its rubber from sustainable farm producers; and partnership with a local university to provide educational opportunities for the company's workers.

The secretary of state has awarded the ACE since 1999 to recognize American companies that are leaders in socially responsible activities and contribute to the overall growth and development of the local economies in which they work.

The Department of State is committed to working with businesses to further these best practices worldwide and to recognize efforts to improve lives at home and abroad, the department said.

The 2013 ACE winners will be announced at the annual ceremony hosted by the secretary of state, which will be held in early 2014.

## President Obama, Three Former U.S. Presidents to Attend Service for Mandela

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr. | Staff Writer |  
09 December 2013

Washington — President Obama and first lady Michelle Obama are leading a U.S. delegation that includes three former American presidents to attend a national memorial service for former South African President Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg on December 10.

The White House announced that the Obamas are being accompanied by former President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, on Air Force One, while former Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter are traveling separately to South Africa.

George H.W. Bush is not able to attend the memorial service. A spokesman said the 89-year-old former president is no longer able to travel long distances, according to news reports.

The American leaders will join about 90 other world leaders at the memorial service being held in Johannesburg's 90,000-seat soccer stadium. A formal state funeral will be held on December 15 in Mandela's ancestral hometown of Qunu in the Eastern Cape province.

Nelson Mandela died December 5 at his home in Johannesburg, surrounded by his family, South African President Jacob Zuma said. He was 95.

"Through his fierce dignity and unbending will to sacrifice his own freedom for the freedom of others, Madiba transformed South Africa — and moved all of us," Obama said at the White House December 5. "His journey from a prisoner to a president embodied the promise that human beings — and countries — can change for the better."

Obama referred to Mandela's well-known clan name, Madiba, more than once in addressing the man who fought for democracy and social justice in the African nation.

After being imprisoned for 27 years for his struggle to end apartheid, Mandela was elected the first black president of South Africa in 1994. Apartheid was the system of racial segregation in South Africa that lasted from its enactment in 1948 until it was officially abolished in 1994.

Obama, who became America's first African-American president in 2009, said his very first political act was to protest against apartheid. Both Obama and Mandela were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, though Obama acknowledged that his own challenges "pale in

comparison to those faced by President Mandela," Obama presidential senior adviser Valerie Jarrett said in an interview before Obama traveled to South Africa.

"I studied his words and his writings. The day that he was released from prison gave me a sense of what human beings can do when they're guided by their hopes and not by their fears," Obama said.

"And, like so many around the globe, I cannot fully imagine my own life without the example that Nelson Mandela set, and so long as I live I will do what I can to learn from him," the president added.

Obama and Mandela met only once in person, in 2005 in Washington when Obama was a U.S. senator. A photo from that meeting hangs in Obama's personal office at the White House, which shows a smiling Mandela sitting on a chair as Obama reaches down to shake his hand. A copy of the photo also hangs in Mandela's office in Johannesburg, according to an Associated Press news report.

During a visit to South Africa as president, Obama was unable to meet Mandela because Mandela was hospitalized. Obama did meet with members of Mandela's family and he also visited Robben Island, standing with his family in the cell where the anti-apartheid leader spent 18 of his 27 years in prison. Over the years Obama spoke with Mandela by telephone.

## U.S. Anticipates Long, Productive Partnership with South Korea

By Jane Morse | Staff Writer | 06 December 2013

Washington — The United States is looking forward to a fruitful and enduring partnership with the Republic of Korea (ROK), says Vice President Biden.

Marking the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-ROK alliance, Biden said: "We can make even greater progress together in the next 60 years if we're wise, trust one another, and are willing to make some sacrifices, shaping a peaceful and prosperous Pacific region."

In remarks delivered December 6 to students at Yonsei University in Seoul, Biden said the U.S.-ROK alliance has grown beyond keeping the peace on the divided Korean Peninsula. Today, he said, the Republic of Korea and the United States are fighting disease, illiteracy and hunger around the world and are championing the rights of women.

Biden was in South Korea as part of a six-day trip that also took him to Japan and China with the goal of reinforcing U.S. ties with the Asia-Pacific region. During his stop in the Republic of Korea, he met with President

Park Geun-hye and Prime Minister Chung Hong-won.

Noting the rising prosperity of the Republic of Korea and the other economies surrounding the Pacific Rim, Biden cautioned that growth also brings with it “new risks and tensions.”

The 21st century, Biden said, “demands new standards for trade and commerce. “ What is needed, he said, “is an open, transparent economic order to deliver the growth for all – because in growth resides peace. And we believe the way to sustain and enhance the region’s remarkable economic progress is not just make sure it is physically secure, but to eliminate trade barriers at and behind borders, protections for intellectual property, one set of rules that applies to all companies, domestic or foreign.”

“We have to end the bureaucratic hurdles that close off trade in key sectors like autos and agriculture,” the vice president said. “We have to agree on final regulations that allow financial institutions to operate fully. “

The United States, he said, is modernizing its alliances to meet the demands of the 21st century. “We’re promoting better cooperation among our allies. The entire region will be more stable and more secure if – if – the leading democracies – Japan, South Korea and the United States – are able to improve their relations and cooperation with one another.”

Biden repeated U.S. concern with China’s announcement of an air defense identification zone, which he said the United States does not recognize. Biden said that during his talks on this trip with top Chinese officials, he “made it clear that we expect China not to take action that increases tensions at the risk of escalation. And I was crystal clear about our commitment to our allies, Korea and Japan.”

At the same time, Biden made it clear that the United States seeks “to sustain a positive, cooperative U.S.-Chinese relationship.” It is “not only in our interest, it’s in the interest of the region, the interest of the world that we get that relationship right with China,” he said.

The United States, the vice president said, is “determined to strengthen our alliances, cultivate new partners in the Pacific Basin, build constructive relations with China, pursue major agreements that further integrate our economies, and join and strengthen the institutions of the Asia Pacific and of the East Asian Summit – APEC [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation], ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] and others.” These goals, he explained, are part of the Obama administration’s policy of “rebalancing” in the Asia-Pacific region.

“Let me make clear what rebalancing means,” Biden said. “It means adding to, not subtracting from, existing commitments we have around the world.”

President Obama is “absolutely committed” to U.S. partnerships and long-standing alliances in the Asia-Pacific region, Biden said. “No one should underestimate or question our staying power.”

### **Top Chinese, U.S. Officials to Discuss Environmental Cooperation**

06 December 2013

Washington – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy will arrive in China December 9 to discuss U.S.-China cooperation on air quality, climate pollution and environmental issues. She will travel to Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong during her visit.

While in China, EPA said on its website December 5, McCarthy plans to underscore steps China has already taken to address air pollution, additional steps to come “and how the United States and China can continue to work together.”

Highlights of her visit, according to EPA, include co-chairing the U.S.-China Joint Committee on Environmental Cooperation, delivering a keynote speech at Tsinghua University and meeting with senior officials, business leaders and nongovernmental organization representatives.

The United States and China represent the world’s largest economies, consumers of energy and emitters of carbon dioxide. “Climate change is a shared challenge, and building on more than 30 years of successful cooperation and partnership, the United States and China must work together to build a clean energy economy for a healthier, safer planet,” EPA said.

China is taking action to address climate change while reducing traditional air pollution and promoting economic growth, and the United States stands ready to help, the agency said.

In recent years, the United States has increased its environmental partnerships to combat climate change.

In June, President Obama announced a Climate Action Plan that outlines common-sense steps to cut carbon pollution from power plants, the biggest individual source of carbon pollution in the United States. In September, the EPA proposed standards for new power plants that are flexible, drive economic growth and spark the clean energy innovation needed for a low-carbon economy.

President Obama also cited the importance of working with other nations when he announced the Climate Action Plan. "We've also intensified our climate cooperation with major emerging economies like India and Brazil, and China – the world's largest emitter. So, for example, earlier this month, President Xi of China and I reached an important agreement to jointly phase down our production and consumption of dangerous hydrofluorocarbons, and we intend to take more steps together in the months to come. It will make a difference. It's a significant step in the reduction of carbon emissions."

"We believe that forceful, nationally appropriate action by the United States and China – including large-scale cooperative action – is more critical than ever," U.S. Special Envoy for Climate Change Todd Stern said in a statement issued in Beijing June 3.

#### MCCARTHY'S SCHEDULE

In China, McCarthy will deliver opening remarks in Beijing December 9 at the U.S.-China Joint Committee on Environmental Cooperation International Workshop on Fuel Desulfurization.

On December 10, she delivers a keynote speech and holds a town hall meeting at Tsinghua University in Beijing. On December 11, McCarthy travels to Shanghai for a meeting of the China Council Green Business Roundtable on Corporate Social Responsibility and concludes her visit December 11 in Hong Kong where she will meet with Christine Loh, under secretary for the environment, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

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