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REMARKS

**Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
White House Summit on International Development: Sustaining The New Era**

**October 21, 2008
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C.**

(8:30 a.m. EDT)

SECRETARY RICE: Good morning. Good morning, everyone. Thank you for joining us here in Washington, especially the many of you who have traveled from overseas.

Fellow ministers and members of the diplomatic corps, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, I'm really pleased to welcome you here to begin today's White House Summit on International Development.

This is truly a special and unique occasion: An opportunity for us to gather together -- both representatives of government and representatives of NGOs and members of civil society -- to support people around the world who are striving to lift themselves out of poverty, to forge lives of dignity for themselves and their families, and to build a world that is not only more stable, but more just. Not a perfect world, but a better world.

We meet today, of course, at a time of unprecedented challenge, a time when the very foundations of global politics and economics are shifting beneath our feet. Many people are hurting from this financial crisis. They are afraid for their livelihoods. They have been squeezed as well by the high cost of fuel and food, and they are anxious about what the future will bring. Millions of people worldwide are experiencing this anxiety, including here in my own country. But none more so than the world's poorest people, the half of our human race that still, tragically, lives on less than \$2 a day. And we meet here today to affirm our enduring support for these men, women, and children -- many of whom live in countries represented here at this Summit.

As we've seen, every country is sharing the impact of this current crisis. And so, too, must we all share the responsibility for implementing an effective response globally, nationally, and locally. Already, President Bush, Secretary Paulson, and their colleagues from the G-8, the European Union, and other leading nations have taken decisive and necessary action and they will meet soon in a meeting that the President will host to review steps taken and steps still to be taken.

A key component of the broader response, though, must be renewed action to promote global trade and development. We must seize this moment as an opportunity to revive and conclude the Doha Round for the expansion of an open, global trading system because that is the best way to create prosperity, and to enable more people to share in it. A successful completion of Doha would send a powerful signal that the world's response to this crisis will be fundamentally different than in the past, fundamentally different than in the '30s in the Great Depression, when many countries -- including the United States, unfortunately -- turned inward, adopted protectionist practices and deepened the crisis.

Similarly, all of us must remain committed at this time to the principles and practices that are proven to reduce poverty -- the ideas the world enshrined in the Monterrey Consensus. Developed countries increasing assistance to developing nations and developing nations meeting their responsibility to rule justly, to fight corruption, to reform their economies, and to invest in their people. Together, we must all advance the principles of successful development that are the focus of this Summit: country ownership; good governance; economic growth; and results-based policies. That is how we will sustain the new era of development and meet the millennium development goals.

Since 2001, the cornerstone of the American approach to development has been accountability. The United States has encouraged all donor countries to make ambitious commitments and to meet them, and we have led by example. We said in Monterrey that we would boost development assistance by 50 percent and we did, three years early, I might add. We said at Gleneagles that we would double assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa, and we are on pace to meet that commitment, too.

This has not been the work of the Bush Administration alone. It has been a bipartisan effort -- Democrats and Republicans together. And all Americans can feel immensely proud of our leadership on development.

Despite the current crisis, the United States is continuing to meet our commitments to the world's poor. Our Administration intends to sustain that commitment and we hope that our successors will sustain that commitment, too. For the United States, supporting international development is more than just an expression of our compassion. It is a vital investment in the free, prosperous, and peaceful international order that fundamentally serves our national interest.

There are those who maintain that it was the excesses and weaknesses of democratic development that caused this crisis and that reveals its inherent failings -- failings of free markets and democracy. To the contrary, the effective response of democratic institutions to the current crisis has affirmed their strength, their resilience, and their enduring appeal.

It has affirmed that, when it comes to managing stresses and strains of globalization to recognizing problems openly and publicly and taking necessary steps to correct them, the core ideas of democratic development are indispensable. Transparency and accountability are essential. Good governance and the rule of law are essential. Institutions that adapt quickly to

new challenges are essential. A state that responds to people's needs and invests in their talents; that is essential.

The question for us here is how we can best support nations that follow this course. Those who govern wisely, fight corruption, and tend to the needs of their people for health and education and personal security, creating opportunity and promoting social justice.

For our part, the United States has fundamentally transformed our thinking and our practice on this question over the past eight years. We have approached developing nations not as objects of our policies, but as equal partners in a shared endeavor of dignity. We have put our trust in leaders and citizens that are taking responsibility for their own challenges, taking ownership of their own development, and remaking their countries.

We recognized, for example, that developing nations struggling to do the right thing should not be shackled by old debt burdens that they can never repay. So the United States helped to lead multilateral efforts to forgive nearly \$60 billion of debt for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

We recognized that investments in basic health are essential for development. So we launched the largest international health initiative ever undertaken in one country: \$48 billion over five years to combat tuberculosis and malaria and HIV/AIDS in the hardest hit countries.

We recognized that good institutions and basic investments in people and infrastructure are essential for development. So we created the Millennium Challenge Account initiative – which transforms our assistance into an incentive for developing countries to build the institutions that foster sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. Our Millennium Challenge Corporation has now approved development grants – not loans, grants – to transformational countries, totaling more than \$7.5 billion.

We recognized that in some countries – those emerging from tyranny, or war, or both – what is most essential for their development is the establishment of basic security, law and order. So the United States has created a Civilian Response Corps – a cadre of diplomats and civilian experts that can support leaders and citizens who are trying to lead their nations out of chaos and lay new foundations for decent, effective states.

At the same time, we have been a critical partner to countries ending conflict – from Angola and Burundi, to Sudan and Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Liberia. In Africa, we've worked with regional organizations like the AU to train peacekeeping forces and to strengthen their capacity to conduct stability operations in Darfur.

Finally, we recognized that deepening and broadening international development is not only a moral imperative, but a strategic interest and an economic interest. So we made development, together with diplomacy and defense, an equal pillar of our security strategy. And we empowered the U.S. Agency for International Development to support the world's striving poor in removing obstacles to their own development – to better education and health, better governance, and greater agricultural productivity.

Thus since 2001, we have doubled our assistance to Latin America, quadrupled it to Africa, and tripled it worldwide. As we have enlarged the quantity of our assistance, we've taken new steps to enhance its quality. We've worked to reform and restructure our foreign assistance – to develop country strategies that address the unique needs of particular nations, that promote country ownership, and that use our precious development dollars as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Taken together, U.S. assistance efforts over the past eight years represent the single largest development initiative since the Marshall Plan. This effort has been led and championed by President Bush. It has been fully supported by our Congress. It has been made possible by the abiding generosity of the American people. And I am proud to have had the responsibility as Secretary of State to direct these efforts.

But if there is one idea that I want to stress today, it is this: When times are hard, as they are now, every nation is focused on protecting its own interests. That is entirely legitimate, and it is to be expected. But what we cannot do – what we must not do – is to allow our generosity and our concern for others to fall victim to today's crisis. Reneging on our commitments to the world's poor cannot be an austerity measure.

Not when there are so many children around the world, girls and boys, who long for that basic education, which will open their minds, and expand their horizons, and enable them to reach their full potential.

Not when there are so many men and women for whom AIDS need not be a death sentence – and so many young orphans, who still need care and still have a chance at a better life than their parents ever had.

Not when there are children who still die needlessly from a mosquito bite when an inexpensive bed net would have provided protection. And not when there are so many countries on the cusp of prosperity, whose citizens yearn for the dignity of self-improvement and social mobility, and who just need a modest hand up from those more fortunate than they are.

Of course, some will ask the inevitable question in these troubled times – how can we afford it? I would ask instead – how can we not afford it? How can we afford to leave the world's striving, struggling poor to their own devices? How can we afford not to support weak, poor, and poorly governed states that as we have seen, can destabilize the world in the 21st century? If we fail to support the neediest members of our international community, and if we stop making investments in the international order that serves all of our strategic and economic interests, we will all be the poorer for it, and our vision of a just and better world will grow dimmer.

So despite our present challenges, I believe that we can be confident that our nations and our economies can emerge stronger and more vibrant than ever. And the reason is this -- we have learned and are learning the lessons of past crises to guide us, both successes and failures. Undoubtedly, changes will be needed and changes will be made to prevent crises like the one that

we are experiencing today. But as we look forward, we must focus on the fundamentals, investing in people, in their health and their education, in good governance and in accountability. That will give people, even the poorest, a sense of control of their lives. And it will counter the fear that the impersonal forces of globalization are sweeping them dangerously along. In turn, their leaders will have a basis to maintain confident, constructive, sustainable engagement in a globalized environment.

This then is the purpose that unites us here at today's Summit. And it is a purpose that we must carry forward into the world at the close of this event. We must explain to our citizens and our leaders why international development assistance is both morally and strategically essential. We must win and sustain support for it. We have accomplished so much together these past eight years. There is no aspect of our work together which is more important. And I know that if we sustain our efforts and stay focused on what we are doing, that our common future will be brighter still.

Now, it gives me great pleasure to introduce a woman who embodies this great hope and has spread that hope to her fellow citizens, and in doing so has spread that hope throughout Africa and around the world. She is the mother of Liberia, but she is an inspiration to us all. Will you join me in welcoming President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. (Applause.)

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