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**REMARKS**

**Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton  
And European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering  
At Town Hall Meeting with Young European Leaders**

**March 6, 2009  
Brussels, Belgium**

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Madame Secretary, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, it's really a great pleasure, as well as an honor, to welcome you here today to the European Parliament. Yours is the most high-ranking visit from the United States of America since President Ronald Reagan joined us in 1985. (Applause.)

Madame Secretary, the election of Barack Obama as President of the United States has given new hope to the world. Everyone in this room knows that we are at a genuine crossroads in history for both our continents. The challenges and the choices we face are huge and humbling. At this critical moment, we need leaders of wisdom, of tenacity, of experience, and of judgment. Madame Secretary, I believe that you are such a leader. (Applause.)

You offer the chance to rebuild American foreign policy and to restore your country's influence and standing around the globe. No task could be more important as we face today's crisis and tomorrow's world. On behalf of all my colleagues in the European Parliament and the young generation represented here in this room, I would like to pay a personal tribute to your remarkable record of public service and your tireless contribution to public life. As First Lady, as senator, as presidential candidate, and now as Secretary of State, you have really shown what public service means. You have been an inspiration and a role model for generations old and new. (Applause.)

Madame Secretary, you called your memoir – the first one, how many will follow – Living History. As I think you will agree, we are truly living history today. So there could be no better time than now to bring together so many young people who will live not just history, but the future, a future shaped in part by the difficult decisions we have to take today.

To make a success of this future, it is vital that the European Union and the United States work closely together and that we tackle the problems we share in common. The setting for this discussion, the European Parliament, is very appropriate. We are a young institution, but one of real and growing power. We have shown how different traditions and interests can be reconciled and harnessed to solve problems too big for any one European country to address on its own.

As the first new nation, you in the United States of America showed how a united and free continent could be much more than the sum of its parts. Two centuries later, we are engaged in an experiment which is just as exciting here in Europe. The European Parliament is at the very heart of this historic project. We are the only democratically elected international institution. We bring together the elected representatives of nearly 500 million Europeans from over 150 national political parties in 27 countries, sitting in seven political groups. In June, we will take our record to the people, in the only transnational elections of their kind anywhere in the world: 375 million citizens will have the right to vote.

Madame Secretary, here in the European Parliament, as in the European Union institutions as a whole, we want to work with you on the central challenges of our time, whether it be the defense of our common values, peace in the Middle East, climate change, energy security, or economic governance. There is a huge practical agenda for us to develop together. We are keen to begin work immediately.

The Obama Administration committed to a new start in transatlantic relations. Let us work together, as equal partners, to build a better future. There is huge enthusiasm, great excitement, and enormous goodwill in Europe toward you, Madame Secretary, and your new President as you begin work in these stirring times. I think there is a similar sense of anticipation, excitement, and commitment in this room today as I ask you to take the floor to discuss the future with the next generation of Europeans.

Ladies and gentlemen, the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. (Applause.)

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** Thank you so much, President Pöttering. It is wonderful to be here, and I also want to thank Secretary General Rømer and the parliamentarians who have joined us. But I am most excited about having the opportunity to engage in a conversation with, as the president said, the next generation of Europeans.

I appreciate the kind words that you said in introducing me. I must confess that I wanted to come here on my visit – the first visit to Europe as Secretary of State – because as I have traveled just in the last weeks, I have sought opportunities in Tokyo and in Seoul, here in Europe, to talk with – and most importantly hear from – the young people for whom all this work is really intended.

The future that we are attempting to shape here in the European Parliament and in the EU in general, as well as with the Obama Administration in our own country, is one that certainly does pose many challenges. But we believe that the opportunity for cooperation and partnership are going to design a series of responses to meet those challenges and to give each and every one of you the chance to fulfill your own God-given potential right here in Europe.

I think it's fair to say that Europe today is viewed by many as a miracle – not supernatural, but made by the hard work of men and women who, in the last several decades, have created an extraordinary international effort that is evidenced by this parliament and the work that is done in the buildings here representing the common future of Europe. It's not a cliché because Europe is enjoying its longest period of peace since Roman times. And that is in no small measure due to the vision of those who first created the concept – which at the time seemed

totally unrealistic – that Europeans could not only work together, but find common ground and set common goals.

Today, even with an economic crisis and the global threats which we will discuss, Europe has never been more prosperous and secure as it is today.

The United States has some years of practice in pulling together diverse, cultural and ethnic and other groups to create, as the president said, a total that is more than the sum of the parts. We know how difficult this enterprise is. I'm not here to tell you what you are doing and what you know, but merely to reflect that the unity of this grand experiment is indeed impressive to those of us who have followed it from the other side of the Atlantic.

It will be up to all of you, the next generation, to take it to the next level. We are here today because generations before you had a dream of a more powerful and more peaceful and prosperous world and a more powerful, united Europe. They fought hot and cold wars to achieve it. Peace has been expanded now to countries to the east that haven't enjoyed that for a very long time.

The task of those of us in authority today is to continue that progress. I know that Europe and the United States are united in a shared vision of the kind of future that we hope to realize. When I look at the problems that come before me as Secretary of State or that President Obama has inherited, I don't underestimate their difficulty.

The list is long. The economic crisis and terrorism, climate change, and energy security, the threat of pandemic disease, human trafficking – there is so much that we have to seriously address. But I am an optimist and I am confident that we are up to the task. Every generation faces the challenges of its time. Some do better than others in responding. This is one of those moments in history where we don't have a choice. We have to come together, and we have to put our best minds to work.

The other day I was in Ramallah on the West Bank and I visited with young Palestinian students who are learning English because of a program that the United States supports. I spent about 30 minutes talking with them and answering their questions. The questions they asked me were the same questions that I was asked in Tokyo or in Seoul, and I look forward to hearing what I'll be asked today here.

I left that encounter, as I have so many in my own country, convinced that the sense of hope amidst difficulties of daily lives, particularly for those young Palestinians, is the most important commodity there is in the world today. But hope alone is not enough. We need a realistic assessment and evidence-based decision making and a sense of political will that overcomes the inevitable obstacles to progress.

So as EU interns, as I'm told, the first global, I urge you to cast a wide net and use the skills and the training that you are gaining here to help continue the miracle of Europe, to broaden and deepen engagement not only with my country, but with people everywhere; to use this model to encourage other nations in other parts of the world to think more broadly and with more vision

about how to unite themselves in common cause; and to help us make sure that the future continues to be more peaceful, more prosperous, and more progressive. That is my hope, and that is what I am committed to working towards.

Thank you very much, and I welcome your questions. (Applause.)

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Thank you for that, Madame Secretary. It's really marvelous to have you here in this beautiful room.

And now it's your turn to make comments or to ask questions with the Secretary of State of the United States of America. Please, who has a question? Yes, please, you. Yes.

**QUESTION:** Thank you, Madame Secretary. My name is Daniel Wylie. I work for the European Free Alliance in the European Parliament, and I'm from Scotland. And my question is: Given that 38.6 percent – that's a the UN figure – 38.6 percent of the West Bank is unavailable to Palestinians due to Israeli military bases due to illegal settlements and due to the wall, and given that every Palestinian leader I met on the delegation last week emphasized that in a year or two a viable and continuous Palestinian state will not be able to exist, there simply will not be land for it due to the growth of the settlements, what concrete actions are you going to take to help stop settlement expansion and the occupation of the West Bank and save the two-state solution? Because we're running out of time. Thank you.

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** Thank you. I also forgot to recognize that there are three overflow rooms of interns and staff, approximately 800 people in total, in the overflow space. We want you to know that we are thinking of you and communicating to you and grateful that you're part of this town hall.

I want to underscore the commitment of the Obama Administration to a two-state solution. The very first action that the President and I took was to appoint a special envoy, former Senator George Mitchell, who this young woman from Ireland who I saw back there will know very well was my husband's envoy – when Bill was President – to Northern Ireland. He's got something of a track record of success in very difficult peace negotiations. We know how difficult this particular situation is. There isn't any argument or doubt about it. We intend to engage immediately as soon as there is a new Israeli government. Senator Mitchell will return to the region to begin consultation.

When I was in the region, I started at the donors conference in Sharm el-Sheikh which was a very great success. I thank the European Union for a significant contribution to the humanitarian aid project for the people of Gaza and the West Bank, because we are also working closely with the Palestinian Authority under President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad, who we consider to be the only legitimate political authority on behalf of the Palestinian people. We are going to do everything we can in the immediate timeframe to provide that humanitarian aid, but at the same time getting prepared through consultations with the Israelis, with the Palestinians, with other nations in the region, including the Egyptians, the Jordanians, Arab governments, and so many others – including the EU – to be prepared to engage in an intensive way on behalf of progress toward a two-state solution.

With specific regard to your reference to settlements, it has been the policy, which I reiterated, that we consider such settlement activity to be unhelpful and that will be on the list of matters that we take up with the Israeli Government.

This is such a difficult and painful time, and I think it's important to find as much common ground as possible. I have said – I said it in Sharm el-Sheikh, I said it in Jerusalem, I said it in Ramallah – it is difficult for the Palestinian Authority or the Israelis to deal with Hamas because they will not accept the Quartet principles or the Arab League principles. That makes their participation impossible because there is a unity on both the Quartet's part and the Arab League's part that in order to be a partner in the peace process, you must renounce violence, recognize Israel, and abide by prior PLO and Palestinian Authority agreements.

So we are engaged, we are focused, and we are going to do as much as we can to push this forward. I believe in all my heart that it is imperative. I've said again throughout the region that it is not just part of my portfolio as Secretary of State, but it is a personal commitment. It is something that I think the entire world must understand. That means we must support and protect Israel's security. You cannot expect any nation to make any agreement that does undermine their security; and that we have to recognize and fulfill the aspirations of the Palestinian people by producing a viable state in which they can pursue their own destiny.

That's my commitment, that's what we intend to do. The President has made it one of the highest priorities of our new Administration.

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** So, the next one. We take a lady. Please, you.

**QUESTION:** Good morning, Madame Secretary. My name is Laura Aquiles. I'm with (inaudible) of the European Parliament (inaudible). And the 11<sup>th</sup> of March is a European date for the victims of terrorism. And I would like to know that (inaudible) terrorism is one of the challenges you mentioned before. But as you said, hope alone is not enough, so I would like to know what are your priorities in this field.

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** The threat of terrorism is one that every nation and every group of people has to contend with. The recent attack in Lahore against the Sri Lankan cricket team was just another senseless, violent act that took innocent lives. We can go and look at how so many of the countries represented here, including of course my own, have been affected by terrorists using new techniques and taking advantage of global networks in order to wreak havoc.

We are working closely with not only the European Union, but many individual countries and multilateral institutions. I think that the world has a united front against terrorism and the extremism which spurs it. The intelligence sharing is important, the law enforcement cooperation is essential, but it is also imperative that we send a message to the individuals and the communities from which they come that we will neither tolerate nor give in to terror as a tactic, and that we offer an alternative to those who are willing to pursue it.

It is something that I take very seriously because, as the President said, I was a senator from New York at the time that the 9/11 attacks took place and spent a great deal of my public service in the Senate both working to help those who were victims of the terror and their families, and working to try to prevent another attack. You're right. It is not enough to hope it goes away or to ignore it or to try to avoid it coming your way, because it's random in many instances, as we saw in Lahore.

We are also very conscious of the fact that much – not all, but much – of the planning of terrorist activity is coming from a network that is primarily based in Pakistan and Afghanistan, along the border in areas that are very difficult for either the Government of Pakistan or Afghanistan or any of our military forces to be able to reach. We are engaged in the Obama Administration in a policy review of our approach to Afghanistan-Pakistan, because we see them together. We want to help support the people of those two countries against the encroachment of terrorist networks.

We are also working hard to prevent the acquisition of any weapon of mass destruction by a terrorist network. There is a constant vigilance on the part of law enforcement and intelligence here in Europe, working with us and others around the world to avoid what would be a calamity. We know that the terrorist networks are determined to try to obtain the fissile materials for a true nuclear weapon. They are also equally interested in chemical or biological or radiological weapons as well.

This is a constant struggle where we have to be vigilant, where we have to try to outthink and outsmart and break up networks, and cooperate together and move toward a time when there is no fertile ground in which terrorists are bred, so that there can be opportunities for people to feel that their future is one that they have some control over and that they are looking forward to, as so many of you believe. That is the underlying goal of what we are attempting to do. Supporting governments, supporting people acting in good faith trying to deal with the terrorist threats on their own territory has to be one of the highest priorities of the EU, the United States, and all of the nations represented here.

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Great. Thank you so much. Now somebody from this side, please.

**QUESTION:** Good morning. My name is (inaudible). I'm president of (inaudible) from Belgium. You said a whole series of big challenges. You had – you just mentioned the terrorist challenge. And of course, the number one challenge right now is the economical and the financial threat. But sometimes it seems that this crisis overshadows the previous crisis, the global warming crisis. Now, how do you seek to combine both of these challenges to make sure that you can re-stabilize the economical markets, but at the same time make sure that we're looking for some sort of (inaudible) equitable development of our energy-consuming way of life? Thank you.

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** That's an excellent question because it's a perfect example of the immediate crisis that has to be dealt with, namely the global economic crisis, and a crisis that is just as important but which decision makers could be tempted to put off to another day. And that would be a mistake.

In the stimulus package which President Obama requested and was passed by our Congress, there are significant investments in green technologies, in renewable energy, in moving toward a new electricity grid, new ways to fuel transportation, very large investments in basic science. We are long overdue in stepping up and making these investments. But we in a sense used the economic crisis to actually get them through, over political objections and other kinds of obstacles that had to be moved out of the way.

There is no doubt in my mind that the energy security and climate change crisis, which I view as being together not separate, must be dealt with. That is why in his recent address to the Congress, President Obama said that we will present to our Congress and do what we can through executive authority to move toward a cap-and-trade system, something that we've learned about from your initial efforts. It is a learning experience for all of us about how best to design our climate – our global climate change regulatory framework and mechanism.

The question that we all have to deal with is how to bring in the entire world in the lead-up to Copenhagen. When I was in Asia, I spoke about this in Japan, in South Korea, in Indonesia, in China, offering to work in partnership, because certainly the United States has been negligent in facing up to our responsibility. We have historically been the largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions, but China has now surpassed us in that. So we've got to bring in China and India and Indonesia and other developing countries. It is not going to be enough for Europe and the United States to try to do some things – we have to have a global response.

It will be difficult to convince some governments and the people that they represent that now is the time given the crisis. I think from our Administration's perspective, this is a propitious time. If we approach it as an opportunity to make these investments through our stimulus packages, we can actually begin to demonstrate our willingness to confront this and have some positive experiences that we can take with us into Copenhagen.

The President and I appointed a Special Climate Change Envoy. We obviously had to demonstrate that our new Administration was 100 percent committed because as you know, our government had not been prior to the change in the White House. We are making up the best we can for lost time. We have problems within our own country trying persuade people that this is economically smart to make these investments now, but we are committed to doing that. We just have to continue to make the case.

Now the energy security piece of this is especially important for Europe. I was very pleased – the President told me and others of whom I've spoken from the EU Commission, have also made the point that Europe is working to establish a European approach to energy security so that individual nations are not put in a very difficult position trying to secure enough energy. There needs to be a joint effort both to create new forms of producing energy while securing existing energy supplies. I think this is a very important subject for the EU to address – a new grid, new pipelines, and everything that comes with it.

We can't lose sight of the fact that even while we're trying to provide the necessities for people, all of us have to change behaviors. We have to have government incentives to encourage us to

change our energy usage and the kind of energy that we are buying. We have to have a framework within which that operates. I'm actually excited by this opportunity. I'm very well aware that we are not yet through this economic crisis.

The chief of staff for President Obama is an old friend of mine and my husband's and was in the White House when Bill was there, and he said: never waste a good crisis. When it comes to the economic crisis, don't waste it when it can have a very positive impact on climate change and energy security. That's what we're trying to do.

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** (Inaudible) and thank you for your answer. And I may inform you and Europe that the European Parliament has finalized its legislation concerning climate change in December, and we were waiting for the new Administration that we have the leaders get together and so the others can join in. And we hopefully, as Secretary Clinton said, we will get an agreement then in Copenhagen in December.

So do we still have some minutes?

**MODERATOR:** We do. And I actually have a question from outside this audience because this event is being web-streamed to more than 31 countries throughout and beyond Europe. The first other question is from Anna in Russia. What is the best way forward to improve relations between the United States and Russia in the wake of last year's war in Georgia and continued problems over gas prices and deliveries to Europe?

(Inaudible) also a question from John in Norway. You just had your first visit to Asia. Does this mean Old Europe is not as important for the United States? (Laughter.)

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** The last question is easy to answer, John. Europe is our essential partner in what we are going to do together to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges.

As just a slight amendment, Vice President Biden came to Europe before I went to Asia, so we are trying to cover the world. And I am very happy to be here at the European Parliament.

Anna's question from Russia is so important. Yesterday at the NATO ministerial, we adopted a proposal to reenergize the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for discussion of matters that we agree with and matters we don't agree with Russia. We think there are a number of areas where there can be cooperation. This young woman mentioned one, terrorism –which has an impact obviously –across Europe and into Russia; nonproliferation, which is an area that the United States and Russia will be working on together over the next years.

There are areas where we have an opportunity to work together, and then there are areas where we strongly disagree. My country strongly condemned Russia's actions in Georgia. We also are very troubled by using energy as a tool of intimidation. We think that is not in the best interest of creating a better and better-functioning energy system that would meet the needs of people.

Now later today I will go to Geneva for our first formal talks. I will be meeting with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and we have a long agenda to begin discussing. But the United States

is very much hoping that we can find areas of agreement and cooperation. Now, will there be disagreements? Of course there will be. We disagree that Russia should have a veto over any country that wants to join NATO or the EU, or that any country should have a sphere of influence that substitutes an outside interest concerns over the interest of the people within that territory of a nation-state. So we do have differences.

But on so many important matters that confront us, we think that the United States and the EU and Russia can be partners. There was an example of that at Sharm el-Sheikh. The Quartet consists of the United Nations, the EU, Russia, and the United States. We had a Quartet meeting. The representative of the Quartet to the Middle East is former Prime Minister Tony Blair. We had a very good meeting together when we were all in Sharm el-Sheikh. We also think that in dealing with Iran, the P-5+1, of which Russia is an important member, can make it clear that international opinion is against Iran pursuing a nuclear weapons program.

I'm looking forward to the meeting tonight and the subsequent meetings, and the standing up again of the Russia-NATO Council. But I want to underscore, as we did in our ministerial meeting in this discussion yesterday, that our engagement with Russia in no way undermines our support for countries like Georgia or the Baltics or the Balkans or anywhere else in Europe to be independent, free, make their own decisions, and chart their own course without undue interference from Russia.

That is a premise of our reaching out and engaging with Russia and in accepting the proposal to restart the NATO-Russia Council, that was explicitly included in the communiqué because we don't want there to be any misunderstanding. We are entering into our renewed relationship with our eyes wide open, and we are going to do everything we can to find as much common ground as possible. We really believe that there's a lot more of it than perhaps has been claimed in the last few years.

Thank you, Anna. (Applause.)

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Well, thank you so much Madame Secretary. I think we still have a very few minutes, maybe the last one – the lady here in the front row.

**QUESTION:** Good morning. I'm (inaudible). I'm an assistant for (inaudible). And I'd like to know whether you and the U.S. (inaudible) increasing autonomy and eventual independence of European nations such as Wales, Scotland (inaudible). Thank you very much. (Laughter.)

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** I am not going to interfere in the internal affairs of any European countries. (Applause.)

I have to call on – I must call on this young man, because he has a T-shirt which says, "I love Hillary." So what can I say? (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** Thank you. My name is (inaudible). In several countries in the world homosexuals are sentenced to death and many more to prison. A lot of gay men around the world died because of the HIV/AIDS policies that the Bush Administration had that didn't allow

to spend money on prevention for men who have sex with men. How do you see the foreign policy of the U.S. changing (inaudible) of human rights, and in particular, sexual rights and gay and lesbian rights? Thank you. (Applause.)

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** Thank you. Human rights is and will always be one of the pillars of our foreign policy, and in particular the persecution and discrimination against gays and lesbians is something that we take very seriously. It is terribly unfortunate, as you just recited, that right now in unfortunately many places in the world, violence against gays and lesbians – certainly discrimination and prejudice – are not just occurring, but condoned and protected. We would hope that over the next few years, we could have some influence in trying to change those attitudes.

Specifically with respect to HIV/AIDS, we have made a very big treatment commitment – as some of you know – through our program called PEPFAR. It is an important part of the American approach toward trying to deal with the HIV/AIDS pandemic. But we haven't done enough on prevention and we haven't done enough on outreach or testing. We're beginning to, and under our Administration we will do much more.

I can only hope that we all live long enough – certainly, I hope I live long enough; I think you all will – to see the end to this kind of discriminatory treatment and a recognition that human rights are the inalienable right of every person, no matter who that person was. That's what we should be trying to achieve.

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Madame Secretary, you are (inaudible).

**QUESTION:** Thank you. I'm Regina O'Connor. I'm from Ireland. I'm an advisor to the (inaudible) group here. But also, I represent Ireland in the (inaudible) initiative by the British Council. It's basically an initiative bringing a hundred young leaders from all over North America, Canada, USA, and Mexico, all the way across Europe and Turkey, to bring people together that are thinking about future trends, future movements, and can understand each other (inaudible), the plenary of which was held in two cities very close to you, your heart, I think Belfast and Dublin this year, because it's an aspect of Northern Ireland and (inaudible) relations and the transatlantic link (inaudible).

Within the transatlantic link network, we came across issues, for example, that – how complex the EU is. And over the last few days, I'm sure you are, you know, grasping the nuances. How do you find the complexity of the EU impinges on the transatlantic alliance (inaudible) global challenges need global solutions? And how dense or how solid is the U.S. Administration and your advisors' experience of the EU?

**MODERATOR:** I'm sorry, there's another question from an African – a French colleague on Darfur because of the issues on --

**QUESTION:** Okay. Thank you very much. My name is (inaudible). I'm (inaudible) I have just one question. What kind of U.S.-EU cooperation, action now, right now, towards Africa, in particular with the Darfur issues? Thank you very much.

**QUESTION:** I think it's the gift of the gab of the Irish today. My name is (inaudible). I'm an Irish (inaudible) at the general secretariat of the council. Secretary Clinton, my question is: How do you find the experiences you've gained from your time as First Lady and also as senator of New York, the experiences you've gained from those few jobs, (inaudible) obstacle or a hindrance in your current position as your country's top diplomat?

Actually, (inaudible) particular attention to the Northern Ireland question, which your – and your husband were very involved in, and also the micro-lending initiative in developing countries that you've got a particular interest in also. Maybe you might (inaudible)? Thank you.

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** First of all, I feel very grateful to have had the experiences that I've had. Certainly the opportunity to serve with my husband when he was President as First Lady gave me a very broad exposure to many problems around the world, many of the kind of cultural and other differences and interests. I think that was very much beneficial to me. Being a senator made me understand the complexity of parliamentary groups.

When you ask about our attitude toward understanding the EU with its many parts, I often find Europeans confused about the way the United States Government operates. I think it's just the nature of the beast. In a democratic enterprise, you have to be constantly dealing with the tension between streamlined, efficient processes that drive toward a conclusion, and representation, consensus building, and the protection of minority points of view. It by definition is complex.

I think that some of the complexity and the questions that we might have are because it's not our system, we don't understand it and we can't imagine what it must be like balancing the many different nations, let alone the even greater number of parties that are represented here in this parliament.

Having said that, and I'll speak for my own country, democracies have to be careful that we don't become so process-driven and overwhelmed by the procedural aspects of decision making that we are in effect paralyzed. And so it is for example, going back to the gentleman's question about climate change and energy security – it took a crisis for us to have the political will to begin to make the investments that we knew at least 10 to 20 years ago were inevitable that we had to make them.

We don't have, as many of you know, a universal healthcare system in the United States. And the President is going to try again. We've been trying for now about a hundred years. It is an imperative. It has economic as well as moral implications. But our political system is structured in such a way that it is so difficult to do what everybody knows you eventually have to figure out how to do.

Without speaking about the complexity of the European political environment, which I have to imagine is even more complex – we only have two parties that we deal with; I have never understood multiparty democracy. It is hard enough with two parties to come to any resolution. I say this very respectfully, because I feel the same way about our own democracy, which has

been around a lot longer than European democracy. We've got to be willing to understand that democracy which doesn't deliver for people will be undermined by the very people it is designed to serve, that there will be frustration, there will be anxieties and insecurities that manifest them in political fashion.

Every democracy has to be as clear-eyed and honest with itself as we possibly can be as human beings and recognize what is dysfunctional about how we make decisions. Because there is a leadership crisis in the world, and the United States and Europe must in my view lead on so many of these matters. So we are fortunate to be democracies. I started by saying Europe is a miracle, and part of that miracle is the complex compromise of different interests that have joined together in all of the institutions of the EU. But process for the sake of process is dangerous. And so I know in our own country, we are trying to reform and change and move forward all of our decision making so that it can be more in keeping with the immediacy of the challenges that we confront.

With respect to Africa, there are many people in this building who have a great deal of interest, expertise, and experience in Africa. I think that both the United States and Europe have got to be more proactive and smarter in the kind of support that we offer to Africa. There is an opportunity, I hope and believe, to be supportive of good governance, rule of law – but the conflicts in Africa, the continuing domination by strong-armed leaders, the unfortunate human toll of conflict from Darfur to Eastern Congo and so many other parts of Africa are extremely difficult to be resolved from the outside. We must build up capacity inside Africa to assist Africans in solving their own problems, and then coming up with ways of incentivizing changes in approach that could result in better outcomes for the people of Africa.

We have seen in the last few days the indictment of President Bashir and the predictable consequences of throwing out NGOs who serve the people in the refugee camps, threats against citizens of European countries as well as the United States. It is one of those difficult moments. The court was created to amass evidence and reach conclusions as to culpability and bring indictments where appropriate, which it has done concerning President Bashir and his role in the genocide in Darfur and other government-sponsored, and condoned activities that have created so much misery in Sudan.

But we know that that's just the first step. I had a long conversation with the Belgian foreign minister this morning about other conflict areas in Africa and what can be done. So this is a matter of real personal concern to me and I know to President Obama, who obviously has a family connection to Africa. Our hope is that we will come up with new ways of supporting and encouraging positive changes in Africa for the betterment of the people there. But it is going to be a challenging time.

I think maybe one more question, and then I think --

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** We still have one – otherwise, we would have (inaudible).

**SECRETARY CLINTON:** Oh no, I'm getting the signal that I have to go. Thank you. Thank you very much.

**PRESIDENT PÖTTERING:** Madame Secretary – (applause). So Madame Secretary, this was a great moment, and the enthusiasm of the young people (inaudible) we could have gone on for hours, but you have to go to Geneva, I to my own region, to Osnabrück in Lower Saxony where we have the visit – the visit of the President of Portugal.

Okay. Anyhow – (laughter) – but I – if you allow, I want to say to our Irish friends we want to be strong, we want to be united as European Union. We need the gift of the Irish to (inaudible) completely. (Applause.)

And Madame Secretary, this was a great moment today for the European Parliament, for the young people, for the (inaudible), for the president of the European Parliament. And what you said mostly could have been said by Europeans, and this shows what unites us is much more than what divides us. So thank you for your visit here. (Applause.)

And with you, Madame Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton, with your President, we know now again we share the same values. United States of America and the European Union go together in the future. Thank you, Madame Secretary. All the best for you. (Applause.)

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