

RELEASE IN PART B6

FINAL Remarks on Climate Change Envoy

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Subject: FINAL Remarks on Climate Change Envoy

B6

This is being printed out for you. Includes additions of State and USAID work on climate change.

SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ANNOUNCEMENT OF SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
THE STATE DEPARTMENT
JANUARY 26, 2009

It is with great enthusiasm that I am naming today a new Special Envoy for Climate Change.

As should be evident by now, the President and I believe that American leadership is essential to meeting the challenges of the 21st century, and chief among those is the complex, urgent, and global threat of climate change.

From rapidly rising temperatures to melting Arctic ice caps, from lower crop yields to dying forests, from unforgiving hurricanes to unrelenting droughts, we have no shortage of evidence that our world is facing a climate crisis. And let's be clear: A world in crisis goes well beyond the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink. It is at once an environmental, economic, energy, and national security issue with grave implications for America's - and the world's - future.

A quick scan of the globe vividly conveys the human toll. Competition for scarcer resources like food and water will lead to migrations of populations, regional conflicts, and greater disparities between rich and poor. Reliance on foreign sources of oil and gas influences our way of life here at home and continues to compromise our national security.

So the urgency of the global climate crisis must not be underestimated. Nor should the science behind it or the facts on the ground be ignored or dismissed. The time for realism, and action, is now.

President Obama and I recognize that the solutions to this problem are both domestic and global – that all nations bear some responsibility, and all nations must work together to find a solution.

Under President Obama, America will take the lead in addressing this challenge, both by making commitments of our own and engaging other nations to do the same. On the domestic side, we are beginning immediately to enact measures that will lead to lower greenhouse emissions and to make new and significant investments in clean energy technology and a new green economy. Just this morning, the President announced major initiatives to improve the fuel efficiency of automobiles so that we can further reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that are largely responsible for climate change and the problems resulting from it. And that is just a start. As the President has made clear, he is committed to enacting a far-reaching new energy and climate plan.

As we take steps at home, we will also vigorously pursue negotiations -- those sponsored by the United Nations and those at the sub-global, regional and bilateral level – that can lead to binding international climate agreements.

No solution is feasible without all major emitting nations joining playing an important part. I want to mention that USAID already has been a leader in advancing climate, clean energy, and conservation activities in the developing world, drawing the clear and important link between solving the climate problem and promoting sustainable development globally. We are committed to building on that work to help developing nations build efficient and environmentally sustainable energy infrastructures -- through technology transfer, adaptation assistance, and support for environmental mitigation -- so that they have the tools and means to address this crisis.

There is no doubt about the complexity and magnitude of the task ahead. But we cannot shrink from the challenge or overlook the chance it offers to propel us toward a better future. If we are smart and bold, we can turn the climate crisis into an economic opportunity that creates jobs, generates growth, enhances our competitive edge, and ensures greater prosperity in the 21st century.

This effort will require disciplined and sustained attention at the highest levels, as well as the vigilance and dedication of one senior official who can harness the broad array of stakeholders in our government as we work toward these ends.