



PRESS RELEASE

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Press Release

U.S. Embassy, Damascus

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton
At the Forum for the Future

November 3, 2009
Marrakech, Morocco

SECRETARY CLINTON: So it is a pleasure to join you for this discussion, and I especially recognize the significance of having governor – government ministers and civil society leaders talking together about these issues of common concern. That may be too rare at sight, but it shouldn't be, because our goal is to listen, learn, and discover new ways that we can work as partners for the good of the people that we represent.

Like all of you, I have experienced firsthand the warm hospitality and openness of the Moroccan people. And yesterday, I had the opportunity in a meeting with King Mohammed VI to express my appreciation for the progress that Morocco is achieving; in particular, the reforms that have granted new freedom to women who now bring their considerable talents to strengthening democratic institutions, accelerating economic growth, and broadening the work of civil society.

On a previous visit to this beautiful country 10 years ago, I had the opportunity to meet with many of the citizens of Morocco. I remember well having a chance to listen to an illiterate father who endorsed his young daughter's dream of becoming a doctor and meeting devout women who had risen up to become advocates for human rights on local councils. Examples like this remind us there is much in Morocco's experience that we can look to guide our efforts today.

Five months ago in Cairo, President Obama called for a new beginning between the United States and Muslim communities around the world – a relationship that is comprehensive rather than focused on a few political and security issues, a relationship based on partnership between people as well as government, and a relationship that lasts for the long term. Those were some of the important words that President Obama spoke in Cairo, and his speech generated a great deal of enthusiasm around the world. Many people heard his call and asked, what can we do; what can you, the United States do; how will President Obama's vision bear out in a new

approach to U.S. policy; and how will that new approach translate into meaningful changes in people's everyday lives?

As President Obama and I believe, it is results, not rhetoric, that matter in the end. Economic empowerment, education, healthcare, access to energy and to credit, these are the basics that all communities need to thrive. And the United States seeks to pursue these common aspirations through concrete actions. We know that true progress comes from within a society and cannot be imposed from the outside, and we know that change does not happen overnight. So we will not focus our energies on one-time projects, but we will seek to work with all of you in government and in civil society to try to build local capacity and empower local organizations and individuals to create sustainable change.

I have asked our Embassy to engage with local communities to solicit ideas for how the United States could be a better partner. I also appointed the first-ever U.S. Special Representative to Muslim communities. The ideas we have heard have helped to shape our plan. Farah Pandith, our new Special Representative, is traveling widely and listening and coming back and expressing the concerns that she has heard from those who are living and working for a better life.

Now, we are focused on three broad areas where we believe U.S. support can make a difference. The first comes from the work and research that has been done over many years. When you ask people in all countries in this region or anywhere in the world what is the biggest concern you have and what do you want to see that happens differently in the future, the answer overwhelmingly is "I want a better job. I want rising income. I want to give my family, especially my children, more opportunities." It cuts across every society no matter where that society is.

I often say that while talent is universal, opportunity is not. And so we are committed to building ladders of opportunity to help develop the enormous talents that reside in the people of this region. Early next year, the President will host an entrepreneurship summit in Washington to convene people focused on creating small businesses, expanding their businesses, taking the talent that they have and translating it into income generations to assist their families.

We have launched a website for this summit. It is www.entrepreneurship.gov/summit. And I invite you to submit the names for delegates that could possibly benefit from coming to this summit, and please provide your comments on topics for the agenda. Because this summit is part of a broader effort to expand support for entrepreneurship in the region, including by establishing new business development centers. It is also my hope that together, we can launch a virtual entrepreneur network that connects the range of people engaged in such activities in the region and even beyond.

There are so many good ideas that die because the conditions are not right for bringing those ideas to market. There are so many people who work so hard every day that they can't realize the benefits of that hard work to the extent that they should. Now we already, as you know, give billions of dollars in ongoing direct aid programs in this region, ranging from a community's

livelihood program in Yemen to a youth employment program in Jordan to our work here in Morocco.

We have invested \$700 million in Morocco through a Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact. And this is an approach that we are working on that grows and has a partnership between our government and the government of people of a country – in this case, Morocco – where we say we're not here to tell you what you need from us; we're here to ask you what we can do to help you realize your own goals. In this case, we are supporting two agricultural sectors – fruit tree farms and small-scale fisheries – as well as artisan craft and strengthening financial services and enterprise support. Over and over, we hear from small and medium-sized businesses that cannot get the financial assistance, they can't get the technical support that would grow their business. So working with the Government of Morocco, we are hoping to really help to see blossom a lot more economic activity at the lower level that will then, from the bottom up, build prosperity.

Our second area will be advancing science and technology, something that we have heard from many of you, to help create jobs and to meet global challenges. It's not something you don't know; it is your history. But it was the Islamic world that led the way in science and medicine. It was the Islamic world that paved the way for much of the technology and science that we now take for granted. And now we face global challenges. How do we address water issues? How do we solve the climate crisis? How do we eradicate disease? Well, we want to look to your societies and we want to help Muslim majority communities develop the capacity to meet economic, social and ecological challenges through science, technology, and innovation.

The State Department has established a science envoys program, and I'm pleased to announce today that the first envoys will be three of America's leading scientists: Dr. Bruce Albert*, a former president of our National Academy of Sciences; Dr. Elias Zerhouni, a former director of our National Institutes of Health; and Dr. Ahmad Zawawi, the Nobel Prize-winning chemist. Each of these men has agreed to travel to North Africa, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia to fulfill President Obama's mandate to foster scientific and technological collaboration. The State Department will also expand positions for environment, science, technology, and health officers* at our embassies. To finance these solutions, the United States Overseas Private Investment Corporation known as OPIC is launching a technology and innovation fund.

Our third area of engagement is education. Last week, I announced our support for a new program for higher education in Pakistan. We have also begun a program to support partnership between U.S. community colleges and institutions in Muslim communities to share knowledge and to train students for good jobs. We are expanding our scholarship opportunities, particularly for underserved secondary school students. One of our most successful education programs is called Access. It provides English language instructions to bright students in poor communities. I am personally committed to this program, and I look for ways to provide additional support, because I have seen firsthand its power.

Earlier this year, I visited an Access classroom in Ramallah. I walked into an enthusiastic discussion of Women's History Month. These were students who did not come from educated families, but they were students with the same ambition and motivation that we heard described

by our colleague, the Palestinian foreign minister, about his own son. We want to create more opportunities for students like these to fulfill their God-given potential.

And this points to a related priority – the empowerment of women. I have said, as some of you know, for many years, and President Obama said it in Cairo, no country can achieve true progress or fulfill its own potential when half of its people are left behind. When little girls are not given the same opportunities for education, we have no idea what we are losing out on because they're not going to be able to contribute to the growth and the development of their countries.

The United States has named our first-ever Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, Ambassador Melanne Verveer. We strongly support the call made at last year's Forum for the Future for the creation of a regional gender institute to help advance women's empowerment across the board politically, economically, educationally, legally, socially, and culturally. And we look forward to working with other governments and civil societies to launch this initiative soon. And we will provide initial funding to make it a priority.

We seek to support civil society efforts worldwide because we believe that civil society helps to make communities more prosperous and stable. It helps to drive economic growth that benefits the greatest number of people. And it pushes political institutions to be agile and responsive to the people they serve. So the United States is launching an initiative called Civil Society 2.0. This organized effort will provide new technologies to civil society organizations. We will send experts in digital technology and communications to help build capacity.

Now, these are some of the ways that the United States is pursuing President Obama's vision for a new relationship. Our work is based on empowering individuals rather than promoting ideologies; listening and embracing others' ideas rather than simply imposing our own; and pursuing partnerships that are sustainable and broad-based. We believe that despite our differences, there is so much more that unites us. Fathers and mothers everywhere want safety and opportunity for their daughters and sons. People everywhere want to have a role in the decisions that affect them, to express their needs to their leaders to be heard, and to help chart their own futures.

I also want to make clear that the United States is committed to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. I know this is a matter that is of grave and pervasive concern among the countries represented here, but even far beyond this region. We are committed to a two-state solution, and we are determined and persistent in the pursuit of that goal. It is important that we all work toward that objective. And I think that does require that all parties should be careful about what we say, the kind of recriminations that are so understandable, but we need to work together in a constructive spirit toward this shared goal of a comprehensive peace.

I believe very strongly that it is attainable. I believe that President Obama's commitment is understood. And I believe that with your support, we can find a way through the difficult and tangled history that too often prevents us from making progress on this most important issue. As leaders of countries that have a direct stake and care deeply about all of the final status issues

that must be resolved, I would just ask you to think about how we can each demonstrate the commitment that is necessary for us to go forward.

Now, we can maintain an allegiance to the past, but we cannot change the past. No matter what we say about it, it is behind us. Or we can work together and follow the vision and the inspiration of President Obama to help shape a future that will be so much better for the children of both the Palestinians and the Israeli families. I am hopeful we can succeed in creating that better world together, because I know what could lie ahead for us if we do.

And I thank you for having a forum about the future, because that is what we have to determine together. And I appreciate the opportunity to be here to build on the vision of the President's speech in Cairo, but to go to the concrete actions with specific results that are necessary, whether it is making peace, creating jobs, or educating our children so that the people we represent can see their lives improving, because at the end of the day, that is what we are all committed to try to achieve. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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Secretary Clinton Announces Civil Society 2.0 Initiative to Build Capacity of Grassroots Organizations

In her remarks today to the Forum for the Future, Secretary Clinton announced Civil Society 2.0, which will help grassroots organizations around the world use digital technology to tell their stories, build their memberships and support bases, and connect to their community of peers around the world.

Building the capacity of grassroots civil society organizations will enable them to do the work that, in the past, Western NGOs and governments have done. With increased capacity, communities are better able to initiate, administer and sustain their own programs and solutions to shared problems.

“Civil Society 2.0” includes the following components:

1. Deploying a team of experienced technologists to work with civil society organizations around the globe to provide training and support to build their digital capacity. The competencies developed in the trainings will include:
 - How to build a website
 - How to blog
 - How to launch a text messaging campaign
 - How to build an online community
 - How to leverage social networks for a cause
2. Partnering these technologists with local civil society organizations and governments to develop and implement technology-based solutions to local problems.
3. Publishing interactive “how to” programs and curriculum online to help organizations that do not have access to in-person assistance.

4. Creating a curated open platform that allows any citizen or company to develop, share or suggest content for the curriculum.
5. Allocating \$5 million in grant funds for pilot programs in the Middle East and North Africa that will bolster the new media and networking capabilities of civil society organizations and promote online learning in the region.

The United States is a strong supporter of civil society around the world. Civil society activists and organizations work to improve the quality of people's lives and protect their rights, hold leaders accountable to their constituents, shine light on abuses in both the public and private sectors, and advance the rule of law and social justice. They are key partners for progress.

The Forum for the Future is a joint civil society initiative of the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region (BMENA) and the Group of Eight (G8). It brings together leaders from government, civil society and the private sector to exchange ideas and form partnerships to support progress, reform, and expanded opportunities for the people of the region.

Secretary Clinton Announces Global Partnerships to Advance Cairo's "New Beginning"

Secretary Clinton delivered a major speech on November 3 in Marrakesh, Morocco at the Forum for the Future, an initiative of the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region (BMENA), the G8 countries, and civil society and private sector groups. She reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to broad engagement with Muslim communities around the world and outlined concrete steps the United States is taking to follow up on the "New Beginning" that President Obama launched in Cairo. Secretary Clinton focused on partnerships to promote civil society, entrepreneurship and economic development, educational opportunity, scientific and technological collaboration, women's empowerment, and interfaith cooperation.

Examples of these initiatives include:

Entrepreneurship and Job Creation

The United States will be a partner in advancing entrepreneurship, job creation and economic opportunity in Muslim communities by providing tools and investing in pioneering local stakeholders and programs. These partnerships will emphasize local ownership and lasting results.

Projects include:

- Convening an *Entrepreneurship Summit* in Washington, D.C. in early 2010 to bring together innovators and leaders in Muslim communities around the world and America's business leaders to advance entrepreneurship and create economic opportunity.
- Supporting the launch of a *Global Virtual Entrepreneurship Network* to connect entrepreneurs with each other as well as a broad range of stake-holders, including investors, mentor networks and business support services, educational institutions, NGOs, and foundations before the next Forum for the Future.
- Fostering *Multilateral Partnerships* with efforts such as investments in the International Finance Corporation's Private Enterprise Partnership (PEP-MENA II) and in the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's program supporting of human capital development.

- Initiating *Youth:Work*, a five-year, \$30 million USAID project to meet the needs of vulnerable youth in Jordan and their communities, in collaboration with the Government of Jordan, the private sector, and NGO partners.
- Launching a \$76 million comprehensive, multi-sector initiative in Yemen to increase economic opportunities, improve delivery of social services, and enhance local governance and civic participation.

Science and Technology

The United States will be a partner in laying the foundation of knowledge economies that will spur innovation, and will support societies in grappling with their greatest economic and environmental challenges. Initiatives include:

- Establishing the *U.S. Science Envoy Program* in which three of America's most prominent scientists, Dr Ahmed Zewail, Dr. Bruce Alberts and Dr. Elias Zerhouni, will travel to countries in North Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia to engage their counterparts, deepen and develop partnerships in all areas of science and technology, and foster meaningful collaboration to address common challenges and realized shared opportunities.
- Debuting the *Global Technology and Innovation Fund* through which the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) will catalyze and facilitate private-sector investments in programs in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa in technology, education, telecom, media, business services and financial technology and green technologies.

Education and Exchanges

The United States is committed to supporting education to prepare young people throughout the world to *seize the opportunities of the 21st century*. Initiatives include:

- Contributing \$45 million to the Government of *Pakistan's [Higher Education Commission](#)* (HEC) to expand partnerships and exchanges, to support infrastructure upgrades and teacher training, and to increase access to education, especially for young people, women, and those living in vulnerable areas.
- Sponsoring the *BMENA Community and Technical College Grants Program* to create partnerships between U.S. community colleges and community and technical colleges in the BMENA region.
- Allocating \$7.25 million for *Higher-Ed Scholarships* for underserved secondary school students in the BMENA region to attend American-accredited universities.
- Investing \$12.5 million in USAID's new *Youth Education Project* in Morocco to provide quality educational services for out-of-school youth and to develop policies and institutional networks to facilitate the delivery of education.

Civil Society 2.0

The United States is launching Civil Society 2.0, an initiative to empower grassroots civil society organizations around the world by helping them use digital technology. It will include:

- Deploying a team of experienced technologists to work with civil society organizations and provide training and support to build digital capacity.

- Funding new empowerment connection technologies with \$5 million for pilot programs to bolster the new media and networking capabilities of civil society organizations, as well as online learning, in the Middle East and North Africa.

Women's Empowerment

Empowering women and girls and expanding their opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of their societies, are core priorities of the United States. Efforts include:

- Providing initial funding for the launch of the *BMENA Regional Gender Institute*, which will make grants, conduct research, promote scholarship related to gender issues and encourage active participation of diverse groups.
- Allocating \$2 million to fund Innovative Women's Empowerment Programs that will strengthen women's participation in all aspects of society and promote women's equality in the Middle East and North Africa.

Inter-Faith Engagement

The United States has a longstanding history of openness and respect for all faiths, including Islam, and seeks to deepen mutual understanding and create new partnerships with Muslim communities around the world. The United States will partner with Muslim-majority host countries in different regions to hold biannual *Inter-Faith Working Groups* that will bring together leaders across faith communities, government, civil society, and the private sector to create actionable plans for addressing common challenges affecting all of our communities.

Secretary Clinton also announced several major initiatives in Pakistan last week, including partnerships on [energy](#), [education](#), [law enforcement](#), and [assistance for internal refugees](#). More information is available here: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/trvl/2009/130992.htm>.

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Forum for the Future and Examples of U.S. Support for Civil Society

The Forum for the Future is a joint civil society initiative of the countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region (BMENA) and the Group of Eight (G8). It brings together leaders from government, civil society and the private sector to exchange ideas and form partnerships to support progress, reform, and expanded opportunities for the people of the region.

BMENA participants are Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

The G8 countries are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The BMENA initiative addresses many of the same themes President Obama articulated in his

Cairo speech – including public-private partnerships – and it is a natural partner for making progress in key areas – including economic opportunity, education, good governance, human rights, and women’s empowerment. It places particular emphasis on increasing opportunity for the youth of the region.

The United States is a strong supporter of civil society around the world. Civil society activists and organizations work to improve the quality of people’s lives, solve community problems, protect their rights, hold leaders accountable to their constituents, shine light on abuses in both the public and private sectors, and advance the rule of law and social justice. They are key partners for progress.

In her remarks to the Forum for the Future, Secretary Clinton reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to supporting civil society around the world, and announced Civil Society 2.0, an initiative to help grassroots organizations use digital technology to tell their stories, build their memberships and support bases, and connect to their community of peers around the world.

Other examples of U.S.-BMENA partnerships to support civil society follow.

- *2009 BMENA Civil Society Forum for the Future local grants program* -- These specialized local grants are intended for civil society participants to be able to realize goals identified and discussed at the Forum. They will help sustain the momentum and role of civil society in the Forum process.
- *Initial Funding for the BMENA Gender Institute* -- The Institute, based in the region, will make grants, conduct research, and promote scholarship related to gender issues and encourage active participation of diverse groups.
- *Seed Program for a Women's Entrepreneurship Center in the UAE* -- This project trained a core team of Emirati businesswomen on business development practices.
- *Awareness Campaign: Corporate Governance in Tunisia* -- The Arab Institute for Business Leaders worked to develop a corporate governance awareness campaign.
- *Empowering Arab Women through Literacy* -- A non-formal, integrated education kit in Arabic geared towards illiterate and semi-literate women in the Arabic-speaking World.
- *Parent-Teacher Council Reform in Oman* -- Community Links helped to form and activate ten model Parent-Teacher Councils in various regions throughout Oman.

For more information, visit: <http://www.maec.gov.ma/future2009/en/default.htm>

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Initiatives to Bolster Science, Technology in Muslim Communities

Secretary Clinton has announced new initiatives to bolster science and technology collaboration with Muslim communities around the world. The Secretary named Dr. Bruce Alberts, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, and Dr. Ahmed Zewail as the first three U.S. Science and Technology Envoys and announced that the State Department will expand positions for environment, science, technology, and health officers at U.S. embassies.

“We want to help Muslim majority communities develop the capacity to meet economic, social and ecological challenges through science, technology, and innovation,” Secretary Clinton said.

The U.S. Science Envoy program is part of President Obama’s “New Beginning” initiative with Muslim communities around the world that he launched in a June 4 speech in Cairo, Egypt. He pledged that the United States would “appoint new science envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, and grow new crops.” The initiative received key support from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator Richard Lugar.

In the coming months, the first Science Envoys will travel to countries in North Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia. They will engage their counterparts, deepen partnerships in all areas of science and technology, and foster meaningful collaboration to meet the greatest challenges facing the world today in health, energy, the environment, as well as in water and resource management. Additional U.S. scientists and engineers will be invited to join the Science Envoy program to expand it to other Muslim countries and regions of the globe.

Dr. Bruce Alberts is widely recognized for his work in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology. Dr. Alberts is a professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of California, San Francisco. As president of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) from 1993 to 2005, he was instrumental in developing the landmark National Science Education standards that have been implemented in school systems throughout the U.S.

Dr. Elias Zerhouni, M.D., was director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) from 2002 to 2008. Dr. Zerhouni is currently a senior advisor to Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and was instrumental in creating the University’s Institute for Cell Engineering. Dr. Zerhouni received his medical degree at the University of Algiers School of Medicine and completed his residency at the John Hopkins School of Medicine.

Dr. Ahmed Zewail is the Linus Pauling Chair Professor of Chemistry and Professor of Physics at the California Institute of Technology and Director of the Institute’s Physical Biology Center for Ultrafast Science and Technology. Dr. Zewail was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1999 for his pioneering work in femtoscience, which allowed observation of exceedingly rapid molecular transformations. Most recently, Dr. Zewail was appointed to the Presidential Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

The envoys will be supported by new embassy officers who will also engage with international partners on the full range of environmental, scientific and health issues, from climate change and the protection of oceans and wildlife to cooperation on satellites and global positioning systems. They will work with multilateral institutions, non-governmental organizations and private sector partners to promote responsible environmental governance, foster innovation, and increase public engagement on shared environmental and health challenges.