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Remarks at Town Hall Meeting

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Dean Acheson Auditorium
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(11:00 a.m. EST)

MS. BEALE: Good morning. Good morning and welcome to Dr. Rice's first Town Hall meeting as Secretary of State.

My name is Sarah Beale. I'm sure almost all of you might say, "Sarah who," and for good reason. I started at the Department only two weeks ago, as an intern in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, where Secretary Rice began her State Department career, also as an intern in 1977. I'm sure all of the interns were as thrilled as I was when, in the first few sentences of her welcome address last Thursday morning, she mentioned that fact.

As we departed the Hall on Thursday, Secretary Rice appeared a few feet from me, just before stepping onto the elevator to go up to her new office for the very first time as Secretary of State, and I shook her hand mentioning my internship. She replied, "Well, you never know. Tell them to be nice to you." (Laughter.) Imagine my surprise when I was called on Friday and asked to introduce Secretary Rice today. This was definitely not in the internship job description. (Laughter.)

During the first Administration of President Bush, I was inspired by the accomplishments and calm professionalism of the Secretary. My presence before you today tells me that we have a leader who not only cares deeply about her country, but also about her team at the Department of State. It is my pleasure and unforgettable honor to present to you Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. (Applause.)

SECRETARY RICE: That's wonderful. Thank you. Thank you so much. (Applause.)
Thank you. Thank you very much.

Well, what a wonderful introduction, and Sarah is absolutely right: The lesson of the day is be good to your interns, you

never know what's going to happen. I was, indeed, here and as an intern in 1977 in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. I worked on arts programming. It was a great experience. And it's nice to be back. So thank you for that wonderful welcome.

I just wanted to have a few minutes to talk to you about how I see the Department and our role together in promoting the interests and values of the United States at this extraordinary time. I'm going to leave a lot of time for questions and answers because that's really why I'm here, is to hear from you, more than for you to hear from me.

I said the other day when I came into the Department, and also during my congressional hearings, that the time for diplomacy is now and that the State Department will have a key role in that diplomacy. And I want to talk a little bit more about why the time for diplomacy is now.

Now, I know that we've been engaged in diplomacy throughout the United States history and, indeed, those of you who have been working hard must be thinking, "What does she mean, now? Because, after all, we've been engaged in diplomacy for all of these years." I know that. But we're in a very special time in history, a very special time, a rare time in history.

And I want to go back to when I was here the last time, which was 1989 to 1991, and it was the end of the Cold War. And as I've said a couple of times during this transition, it was an extraordinary time to be lucky enough to be the White House Soviet specialist. The end of the Cold War. I was lucky enough to participate in the liberation of Eastern Europe, the unification of Germany, and to see shortly after the collapse, the peaceful collapse, of the Soviet Union.

Now, as you can imagine, those were incredibly heady times. But I recognize, and I think we must all recognize, that it was really just a matter of harvesting good decisions that had been taken in 1946 and in 1947 and in 1948 and 1949 by people like Harry S. Truman, Senator Vandenberg, George Marshall -- whose portrait looks right into my office, by the way -- and Dean Acheson, for whom this auditorium is named, and many others like them, Paul Nitze and George Kennan and others.

And what did they do? Well, they took a world that really lay asunder at the end of the devastating war of World War II, and they, despite dizzying setbacks for freedom and for liberty, found a way to bring the intellectual capital and energy of this country to bear so that they left a world that was safe -- safer and freer, and, by the time I was here in 1989, ready to make the transition to a truly whole and free Europe.

Now, how did they do that? Especially when you think back to 1946. In 1946, the reconstruction in Germany was still failing. Many Germans were still starving. In 1946, the communists won large minorities in both Italy and France. People actually worried that they elections of 1948 might bring communist governments to power in Italy and France. In 1947, there were civil wars in Greece and Turkey. In 1948, Berlin -- the Berlin crisis permanently split Germany into two halves. In 1948, Czechoslovakia fell to a coup. In 1949, the Soviet Union exploded a nuclear weapons five years ahead of schedule and the Chinese communists won.

Now, looking at that dizzying array of setbacks, you wonder how in the world did they create circumstances that ended up in the world, the Europe and the Asia of 1989 to 1991, or certainly is now. And I think they did it by staying firm about values. They recognized that in order to have a different kind of Europe, you were going to have to have a different kind of Germany, and indeed, against those more realistic powers like Great Britain, they focused hard on what would happen

to the German people, they focused hard on building a Germany that was democratic.

They believed that there could be a democratic Japan, despite the fact that there had never been a democratic tradition in Japan, and because they believed in those values and they built institutions like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that found their foundation in those values, they left a legacy that we now enjoy with a Europe whole and free and an Asia that has many democratic allies. What a tremendous accomplishment.

Well, we are now in a similar period. We have fought two wars in the greater Middle East, in Afghanistan and Iraq. We face a world in which we recognize after September 11th that we have to have change in the Middle East, change based on democratic values, change based on the spread of liberty, because without the dignity and the hope that liberty and freedom bring, we're going to see nothing but the kind of hopelessness that terrorism brings. And we now understand that we have to have a different kind of Middle East. It's a time, again, when America's values and America's interests are completely linked.

Now, we have seen some tremendous steps forward in the last three-and-a-half years, as well as tremendous challenges since September 11th. Of course, the country has come together around our common values; that's something that we all applaud and find and see with pride. But we've also seen people around the world answering this call about freedom and liberty. Just think about the Georgian revolution or the Ukrainian revolution in Europe and in the Caucasus, but also, people voting in huge numbers in Afghanistan, voting in the Palestinian territories, and yesterday, voting in Iraq, voting in Iraq in large numbers, despite the efforts of the terrorists to intimidate them, to sow fear.

As Zarqawi said, democracy is something for infidels, he said. A vote for democracy is something that we will oppose. Well, the Iraqi people answered that and answered it resoundingly. So this is a time when democracy and freedom can be on the march. This is a time when we can demand good governance for people who are trapped in hopelessness and poverty. That's why even our development assistance programs have a new task to them, to be something like the Millennium Challenge Account, that says you have to govern wisely in order to use development assistance wisely. And it is a time when the United States can reach out to those in need, when the United States is taking on the mantle of wanting to care about those who are afflicted with AIDS, and that's why the President's Emergency Relief Plan for AIDS is a part of who we are as a people.

We are people who believe in values. We believe that there is a moral obligation of the strongest to help the weakest, and that is why AIDS and the Millennium Challenge and all of the things that we're doing in development are so important. And we've showed our heart once again, as we did in tsunami relief, because when Americans saw this great disaster, not only did the United States Government respond, but the American people responded, and they responded in great numbers.

That is the basis of our foreign policy. It's a foreign policy based on values; it's a foreign policy based on the heart of who we are. Yes, we have interests, and we know that there is a world out there that looks a certain way, that we have to deal with the world as it is. But you know, the thing about the Trumans and the Achesons and the Kennans is they didn't just accept the world as it was. They believed that it was possible to change it.

That's why this is an extraordinary time. That's why the Department of State is going to be leading a tremendous effort to use our diplomacy literally to change the world.

Now, I want to talk about a few examples in our midst of transformational diplomacy, meaning that we are doers. We're activists in this effort to change the world. Yes, we'll analyze. And yes, we will report. And yes, we will come up with great ideas. But we also have to be able to really engage and to get it done. That's the new challenge for diplomacy.

Before I speak about these three efforts that are examples of transformational diplomacy, though, I want to say one other thing to each and every person in this room. There is no such thing as an insignificant or unimportant task or an insignificant or unimportant job. Not in the State Department. Every single task is important. Every single job must be done well. It does not matter what job you have, it doesn't matter if you're administration, all the way up to the Secretary, there is no unimportant or insignificant task.

And so we have to have a dedication and a willingness to work hard at whatever it is we do, because everything that we do matters and everything that we do counts.

So I'm counting on all of you, every person in this room and every person beyond listening, to take on the challenge that we have, because if we do what we do well, we, too, will be a part of a legacy that leaves to people 30 or 40 or 50 years from now a transformed world, and they can look back and they can say, it's amazing, the decisions and the actions that were taken in 2005 and 2006 and 2007, so that when a President of the United States sits across now from democratic allies across the world, they'll know that we've done our job well.

Transformational diplomacy is not easy. It means taking on new tasks, breaking old habits, working with people who are trying to make those transformations themselves, being partners with those around the world who share our values and want to improve their lives.

And we've got some examples right now of transformational diplomacy, and I'm going to ask just three groups of people to stand. The people who were involved in tsunami relief, if you would stand. Are you here? There we are. People involved in tsunami relief. All right. You see before you an example of people who worked enormously long hours and very, very hard over the last few weeks -- some are down here -- to respond to the tsunami. And I can tell you. I've been briefed on what we did.

One of the things that was done very, very well in tsunami relief was that we made common cause with other countries around the world who had something to contribute in tsunami relief. We had a core group early on, as you'll remember: India and Australia and Japan, the United States -- navies that could respond to the disaster there.

It was not, by the way, an organization with an address. It was a coalition of the willing that put itself together to deal with that -- those requirements for that time. And so tsunami relief and the way that we went about it is an example of transformational diplomacy.

How about the people involved in HIV/AIDS? Just there. We've got a few people around the auditorium who have been involved in our efforts in support of HIV/AIDS. And one of the really wonderful things about this program is it's not just the delivery of vaccines or the delivery of antiretrovirals -- although that's very important, too -- but the process is as important as what we're delivering.

I was out in Uganda to see one of the programs on which we modeled this, and what you try to do is to improve the

health care delivery system at the same time that you produce the antiretrovirals and other drugs that will help people to be cured or help people to be treated for aids. The important thing is that they're working with individuals in these countries to improve health care at the same time. It's an example, again, of transformational diplomacy. Thank you.

And now if the folks who've been involved in the PSI -- the Proliferation Security Initiative -- some of them would stand. Okay. You've got people around who have been involved in this. What is the Proliferation Security Initiative? Well, again, it is an organization that really doesn't have an address or a building. But what it is doing is it is using interdiction based on current national and international laws to interdict suspicious cargos around the world that may be weapons of mass destruction cargos.

They had a big success in interdicting a cargo on its way from North Korea to Libya that we suspected of being contraband, and, by the way, it helped the Libyans decide that it was time to give up their weapons of mass destruction, so again, an example of transformational diplomacy. It means crossing disciplines. It means crossing regional lines. It means crossing different kinds of expertise together to solve problems. And we will have to do more of that as a Department if we are to meet the tremendous challenges that we have.

So I look forward to working with all of you in this extraordinary time. I want to mention one other thing because I believe strongly that we need to prepare for the challenges of the future. I want to reach out to young officers who want to grow and who aspire to help the Department move in new directions. And so today, I'm going to announce that we will soon be establishing a new fellows program named for my dear friend and our dear immediate past Secretary, Colin Powell, to provide ideas and insights to me and to others on the leadership team and to have a chance to be recognized for their potential.

The Colin Powell Fellows Program will be a group of Civil Service and Foreign Service Specialists and Foreign Service Generalists who have demonstrated the commitment and dedication that we need. They will represent the best of what the Department of State is and what it must be in the future. And we'll be telling you about the Powell Fellows Programs in the weeks to come.

So thank you very much for your attention. It's a great and exciting time. We have a lot of challenges. A lot of people are making the ultimate sacrifice to make possible the march of freedom and democracy and liberty. And I look forward to being involved with each and every one of you as we work toward these great common goals.

Thank you very much. (Applause.) Thank you.

Now I'm happy to take a few questions, and I understand there's a microphone someplace and that people can go to it.

QUESTION: My name is Al Murphy from IIP, the Africa Team.

I just want to thank you. When you talk about being timely, it makes a statement. When you come to us in the beginning, it shows, as far as your priority, as far as the Town Hall meeting. And also, when you talk about your timing for diplomacy when we have different things going on like the tsunami, HIV/AIDS, democracy -- different things like that -- it's really important that we come together as a unit. And it's new for -- it's a good time for a new situation for us to have an impact. And I'm talking about impact and also visibility as far as making a difference, you know, for -- in people's lives; so

I think it's very important.

Also, I didn't see any coverage, much coverage, dealing with Somalia on the tsunami relief. So thank you again.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes. Well, thank you very much. And let me just say it's a very important point, we are going to be working together on some very difficult issues. I want to assure you that I know, too, that the question of the resources that we have to deal with the difficult issues that we will face will be important to each and every one of us.

These are going to be tough times in terms of budgets and the like, but as we deal with all of these issues, we'll make our case because we want to be sure that we have what we need to carry out our transformational diplomacy.

Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: Hi. My name is Colleen Hinton. I'm with the Cryptological Services branch.

And I just wanted to know, how open are you going to be for suggestions from front-line people? I'm not talking about managers of bureaus and all that kind of thing. I think you'd get a much better idea of what needs to be done in the Department to fix systemic problems if you talk more down at a lower level to people that don't have their own agendas, you know, things that -- kingdoms they're trying to protect and that sort of thing. (Laughter.)

(Applause.)

I say this because I'm an operational person. I'm not in diplomacy. But operations is what supports the diplomacy and because we have the shrinking dollar and we have all these things we have to pay for, we need to work as efficient as possible. And I have some suggestions about budget and things like that, but because of the level I'm at, who's going to listen to me?

So I was just wondering if you (laughter) -- if you're going to have, maybe, a suggestion box kind of thing, maybe an e-mail, where people could just say, this is what's happening in my -- not a ratting kind of thing, but a thing of, this is a systemic problem and this is how I think it could be solved.

SECRETARY RICE: That's a very good idea. And first of all, let me say you are in diplomacy, because if you're a operation supporting diplomacy, diplomacy won't go on without you. And so that's really what I mean. Each and every one of us is a part of diplomacy.

QUESTION: Well, I do travel around the world, so I do have to be diplomatic (laughter) for the State Department.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes. And it's a very good idea. Let us look at how we can get suggestions up because I think you're right. Sometimes people have good suggestions and we wouldn't normally hear them. We'll look for a way to do that.

QUESTION: Thank you.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, I'm John Limbert. I'm the president of the American Foreign Service Association.

And on behalf of our 13,000 members, let me welcome you here and say how much we appreciated your kind words on Friday and also on Thursday at your entrance about the Foreign Service and about the Civil Service, about our Foreign Service Nationals, and also your citing our fallen colleagues when you came in through the C-Street lobby. Let me assure you, also -- let me wish you great success in your work and assure you that you will certainly have the support of everyone here who works for you.

Since we're a union, I have to ask you about money.

SECRETARY RICE: Of course.

(Laughter.)

QUESTION: The budget news coming out, what we hear, at least the preliminary news, isn't very good. And how are we going to make sure that we do not repeat the bad days of the '90s, which really -- which crippled, crippled our operations. We were cut -- our offices, our posts were cut below critical mass and left pretty much hanging out to make do as best they could. How are we going to make sure that we don't cripple our -- not just our operations, but our very diplomacy itself?

And second, again, a union issue, same part of this: I would like to hear, we would like to hear very much your views about ensuring pay equity or comparability pay or locality pay for the 95 percent of the Foreign Service who currently take a 16 percent, or \$110 million cut when they go overseas, when they leave Washington to go overseas, whether they go to Barcelona or to Baghdad. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you very much. Let me take the second question -- first of all, let me thank you very much for the warm reception that I have received from the association and from others here. And I hope to continue those -- that relationship very intensely because I think we have a lot of work to do together.

Let me start with the locality pay issue, which the Department has been working on, I know, year after year, and I will continue to work on that issue. I do think it's an important one. It does have real resource implications, but it's nonetheless an important issue and I've already mentioned to OMB that I'll be coming back at them about it. We'll see how far we can get. But yes, I do think it's an extremely important issue.

The second point about resources more broadly: We can't afford to go back to the '90s when we were missing whole classes of people. That is really not something that we can countenance. I realize how important the Diplomatic Readiness Initiative is. And we will try to continue it at a pace that meets at least the need to continue to bring fresh blood into the Service and to make sure that people are well trained and well taken care of. So you can be assured that I'm most dedicated to making sure that we have a steady flow of people coming in.

It is going to be a difficult budget time. The country has a difficult budget time. We have a number of demands on the budget, and it means that bringing down deficits and the like will be important, and we're going to have to be good partners for the President in trying to deal with those issues. And I'd just ask you to recognize that as a country, we have

a problem and we will need to be a part of the process of dealing with that problem.

But in doing so, we will also make sure that the tremendous charge that we have to lead the diplomatic effort, to support those diplomatic efforts, to train people well, to make sure that people are safe and secure in the embassies, to make sure that our nationals abroad have access to us so that they can be secure in dangerous times, that those will be very high priorities. I know they are very high priorities for me. They are high priorities for the President, as well. We will do everything we can to make sure that we've got the resources that we need. So thank you very much for the question.

Yes.

QUESTION: I'm Cheryl Pellerin with International Information Programs.

I'd like to know what you think about Science, as a diplomatic tool.

SECRETARY RICE: I think science, as diplomatic tool, is great. I come from Stanford University. And just let me say that, first of all, I'm a huge proponent of exchanges, student exchanges, cultural exchanges, university exchanges. We talk a lot about public diplomacy. It's extremely important that we get our message out, but it's also the case that we should not have a monologue with other people. It has to be a conversation. And you can't do that without exchanges and openness. And so I'm very, very devoted to that, and it gets to the question of science.

At a place like Stanford, the wonderful thing is you look around and you cannot find a more multiethnic, multicultural, multinational endeavor than in the sciences, and the United States has always been in the lead of being at the center of international science. And science and knowledge know no boundaries. They can't know boundaries. What's discovered in Russia, or what's discovered in the United States or what's discovered in India or in Israel, it all forms the base of scientific knowledge.

The other thing is that the United States can lead in problems where science and technology can be the solution. We have been very involved in issues concerning greenhouse gases and climate change, for instance. This is an important issue. And the United States is spending \$5 billion a year on these questions. Eventually, energy and the economy and science and technology have to come together to give us better solutions to these problems.

So yes, we can press on a number of fronts on science: Openness in recognizing that there are no boundaries and therefore keeping ourselves open to other people, making sure that we are at the center of the scientific discourse when it comes to particular issues that science can help, and I think just being representatives of the importance of the international character of science.

Yes.

QUESTION: Dr. Rice, thank you very much for meeting us today. My name's John Heffern. I'm from the Human Resources Bureau.

And I had a question, sort of, about your time. Your time and your attention are finite. And to some extent, there is a tradeoff between the time that you spend on policy and diplomacy as opposed to the time that you might spend on, shall

we say, taking care of the troops. And so my question is, just where do you see yourself on the continuum of policy and diplomacy on the one hand and taking care of the troops on the other?

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you. Well, first of all, always take care of the troops. I'll always take care of the people because you can have the best ideas and the best buildings and the best all that, and if you don't have the people, you're not going to get anything done.

I'm a huge believer in human capital. And I know that my time is finite, and I'm getting on a plane on Thursday and I'm going to go to ten countries in seven days or something like that. I think they're not actually telling me. They don't want me to know. (Laughter.) And I'm going to be, you know, doing this and that. But let me tell you something. I care about the people in this Department, their well-being. The first briefings that I had were from M, in management, because I wanted to know what the issues were in terms of pay and in terms of training and in terms of safety of our people.

You can't do anything unless people are well taken care of. I think if you went back to talk to people who knew me when I was Provost at Stanford, they would tell you that I spent a lot of time -- I was the Chief Operating Officer of Stanford, in effect. The Stanford Provost is really a management job. And I understood in that job that I couldn't get anything done unless I had people and the resources to help them do their jobs and the facilities in which they needed to work and all of those things. So it'll be extremely important to me. And it'll be important to my team.

I'll have good people around me who also pay attention to what's happening to the people. I know very well how important this set of issues was to Colin Powell and his team. You can be certain that we're not going to have any drop off in that regard. And what you do in Human Resources, what you do in nurturing people, in training them and making sure that they have what they need is an extremely important function. I was not kidding when I said we're all involved in diplomacy, because diplomacy will not work unless you do your job.

(Applause.)

QUESTION: Secretary Rice, my name is Lee Rainer. I'm in the Bureau of Administration.

There isn't very much that goes on here in the State Department that the Bureau of Administration is not involved in. I don't have a question. I just want to let you know that we've got your back.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you. Thank you very much.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, my name is Charles Newstead and I'm from the Nonproliferation Bureau.

And I just wanted to mention to you, both a diplomacy problem and a nonproliferation problem and an energy problem, which is all wrapped up together. We've been working on this for the last 18 years while I've been here. And it's called the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor, ITER, I-T-E-R.

SECRETARY RICE: ITER, yes.

QUESTION: And the President himself has taken the decision for the United States to reenter ITER. For a while it had to leave because of budget problems. But recently, the United States within the last year or two has gone back into ITER, but we've run into a great roadblock because there are two countries that want to have ITER, France and the Chinese -- sorry, the Japanese.

SECRETARY RICE: And the Japanese, right.

QUESTION: And unfortunately, they're knocking heads against each other. The United States has been quite open about saying, well, either country would be okay, though we, at the moment have a preference for putting it in China. But unfortunately, because there's six countries involved and it's gotten quite political and difficult, the whole thing is in great danger of going nowhere.

And the reason I'm stressing this is not so much because of a trivial problem or the politics, but because this is our chance, the world's chance, to have an inexhaustible energy source, which is the source of energy the sun uses, only we could build it here on earth. And this would be a major, major accomplishment if we could do it. But we don't want to lose the opportunity because it's only now that we're going to do that.

And the United States would only pay 10 percent of the cost of the project, which is \$5 billion, by the way, over ten years. That's very cheap -- just 10 percent of that. The other countries are paying much more. But we're in danger of losing all of that. And since I've spent so long working on this, I just --

SECRETARY RICE: I appreciate that, yes.

QUESTION: I just wanted to have you know, personally, about it because you've got so many things to focus on.

SECRETARY RICE: No, but you'll be very pleased to know that I do know personally about it and, in fact, have done some work on it. And the ITER project is a very important project and we hope it can move forward. We have backed the Japanese site at this point. But we have said to the EU that if they can work something out with the Japanese, then we will do whatever needs to be done here.

But the scientists, actually, under the direction of Jack Marburger, the Science Advisor to the President, selected the Japanese site as the scientifically best site, and we'll continue to work the problem. I agree with you. It's an important project and we need to try to break through what is currently this logjam, 3 and 3; and I want you to know I do know about it.

QUESTION: I'm impressed that you know that much about it. (Laughter.) Because with all the things the Secretary has to know, you know, that's just one minor little thing. But thank you very much for knowing that (laughter) and for saying you're going to do something. And I'll wait to see what happens.

SECRETARY RICE: Well, we'll keep working on it. Thank you.

QUESTION: Thank you.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY RICE: Yes.

QUESTION: Good morning, Dr. Secretary Rice. My name is Tory Birks, and I'm actually in A Bureau of Transportation Division.

My question is of a little lighter note, and I intentionally use the word "note." Anyone who has done any research on your background knows that you're a pretty accomplished musician, and I'm a musician as well, so what I would like to know is, during these next four years, do you plan to give us a concert?

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

SECRETARY RICE: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate that invitation and when I'm not on an airplane, I'll try to work and see if I can't do that. I do have to tell you briefly that I was, indeed, a piano major in college. I started piano lessons when I was about three-and-a-half years old because my grandmother taught piano, and I wanted to learn to play, so she taught me to play. I could actually read music before I could read.

But then I went off to college. And about halfway through college I went to a very well known music festival and I encountered 12-year-olds who could play from sight what it had taken me all year to learn. And I thought, I'm going to end up playing a piano bar someplace (laughter) or maybe play at Nordstrom, (laughter) but I'm not going to end up playing at Carnegie Hall. (Applause.)

And so I decided to major in something else. And in one of the great journeys around Denver University's possible majors, finally ended up in a course in International Politics taught by Madeleine Albright's father, Joseph Korbel. And that's what got me into this field, but I do still play. And I play mostly chamber music now, so maybe one of these days I'll try to get it together and play for you.

(Applause.)

QUESTION: Good morning, Secretary Rice. Thanks so much for speaking with all of us.

My question's on a slightly more serious note than that one. I work in the Office of the Legal Advisor. And my question is, what is your view of the role of International Law in international diplomacy? Thanks.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes. Thank you very much. International law is critical to the proper function of international diplomacy. And not only that, the United States has been the most important voice for international legal norms in international politics. We depend on a world in which there is some international legal order. Because there are so

many countries in the world that don't have our own domestic order, legal order, we depend on norms of behavior in international politics. And I want to just be very clear. We are a country of laws. We will be a country of laws. We respect international obligations and treaty obligations and international law. And we're going to continue to make that very clear to the world.

I know that there are those who are concerned by some of the things that happened like, for instance, Abu Ghraib. And that was a horrible, horrible blot on America and on our reputation. The President said what most of us felt, that it made him sick to his stomach when he saw that.

The United States, though, is a country of laws. And as a result, there have been investigations of what happened there and people are, indeed, being punished for what happened there. But I want to be very clear: This Department, along with the rest of the Administration, will be a strong voice for international legal norms, for living up to our treaty obligations, to recognizing that America's moral authority in international politics also rests on our ability to defend international laws and international treaties. So thank you for the question.

Yes.

(Applause.)

QUESTION: Good morning, Madame Secretary. My name is Alisha Earle, and I'm a Presidential Management fellow here in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. And if you don't mind, could you just please explain more about transformational diplomacy and how do you see that working in the future with the State Department?

SECRETARY RICE: Sure. What I mean by transformational diplomacy is, really, we have to be doers. This is a time in which what we're really doing in our diplomacy is we're partnering with people in other countries to give them capacity to move toward democracy or to move toward prosperity. We aren't what, you know, for most of us in international politics, this is a different world. We're not as much reporting on them or writing analyses of them. We're actually, if you look at what the people in Iraq are doing, our people in Iraq, the Embassy, or what the Embassy is doing in Afghanistan, they're really partnering with people to make their lives better.

The people who are involved in the HIV/AIDS initiative are designing programs to work with the people who are going to be the deliverers of the antiretrovirals. The people who are working in tsunami relief are doing the action of working with those who had to do the relief effort, the organizing of those efforts.

Now, we've done some of this all along. But it's much more the core of what we do now than an auxiliary part of what we do. And we're going to need different skills. We're going to need to work to develop those skills. One of the most interesting things was putting together the senior advisors who went out to Afghanistan or went out to Iraq, these are people who are actually sitting in ministries and helping those people come to terms with how you build an accountability system.

This is a time, it's a great time, because when you're in a period in which many, many countries around the world are trying to shed old habits and learn new ways of doing things, and believe that we have the technical expertise to help, they look to the United States and to other countries to help them make that transformation. So that's what I mean by

transformational diplomacy.

It's a time when, if we do our jobs well, we are going to build relationships for a long time into the future with competent, democratic states around the world. I want to just give one other example. In peacekeeping, one of the first questions that's often asked is, well, is the United States going to do it?

What we've been trying to do is to say, we need to build other peoples' capacity, too, so when in Liberia, for instance, we worked with ECOWAS and with the Nigerians and with others to help them do the peacekeeping in Liberia. The United States was there for a short time and then others took over the goals, and so -- took over that work. And so we need to be able to work with others hand in hand to help train, build capacity, and solve problems so that we can spread this time of extraordinary desire for democracy and prosperity.

Yes.

QUESTION: Thank you, Dr. Rice. My name is Dan Scher and I work in the Information Resource Management Bureau. Thanks again for coming here today, really appreciate it.

You were speaking about transformational diplomacy. I was very intrigued by that idea. And I noticed you quoted Dean Acheson, or mentioned Dean Acheson in, I think, every speech you've had. Acheson said when he joined the Department, the Department was completely outdated in its operational ways, a fact of which quite a few people in the Department were unaware at the time. Nevertheless, I think we've made tremendous progress in my area on operational with Internet access, thanks to Colin Powell, which we hadn't had previously. But as we move into this transformational diplomacy, there's a lot of other things -- it sounds like being doers, we're out and about and we're engaged in doing things beyond our desks and that sort of thing.

A lot of our infrastructure on the IT side is still very much in that, perhaps, older format that we're classified, we're closed down, although that certainly has a role, and we're tied to the embassy and to the desk. And the technology, of course, I think, gives us opportunities to move beyond that, but there's a lot of work to be done there. I just wanted to hear your thoughts, perhaps, on that area.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes, thank you very much. Yes, I recognize very well what Secretary Powell did in terms of the IT structure. It's extremely important. We'll try to continue that work. I'm glad you mentioned classification. We do need to be certain we are cognizant of and vigilant about security. It's one of our most important obligations.

I think ethics and security are the kind of foundation of what we do. And so it's important -- don't pass classified information to somebody who isn't possibly -- isn't supposed to receive it. Don't put something on your unclassified computer that's classified. I mean, these are really basics and we're going to -- we have to be absolutely vigilant about that.

We also have to take advantage of the kind of open architectures that are out there to communicate. And so now, with some of the hardware investments having been made, I know that the next phase, the next challenge is to put those good resources to use so that we can change our work processes and they can actually help us to do our work.

I was the executive chairman of Stanford's management information systems overhaul. And Stanford, you would

think, Stanford University, technologically very sophisticated, right? It's in the middle of the Silicon Valley. David Packard, Bill Hewlett, all -- Google, all of these things come out of Stanford. Stanford had one of the most antiquated information systems you'd ever want to see.

Why? Because in the 1950s it built Legacy systems with very smart people who knew how to build these systems, and by the time we got to 1997 or 1998, none of those people were around anymore. We were going to have to train people in these old-fashioned systems in order to be able to keep them working. And so we put out -- we did a management systems overhaul. But you can buy the hardware, unless you can change the work processes, unless you can convince people to use the technology in real support of their missions, the technology goes to waste.

And so I know in the briefing that I had with the CIO and with the IT people that they're going to be asking all of us to do training and to understand the real power of these information systems for what we can do in our work. And I want you to try to be cooperative. I know we've all got our ways of doing these things, and we've all got our spreadsheet in the desk drawer, but we'll take advantage of these systems if we really will take the opportunities that will be before us. Thank you.

QUESTION: Hi, Secretary Rice. My name is Charlie Hale and I've been working here for about three hours. It's my first day. (Laughter.)

SECRETARY RICE: Oh, good for you. (Laughter.) You're even newer than I am. That's great. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: I had a specific question about your vision of the role of the U.S. in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially after Arafat left, and specifically our relationship with the Palestinian territories.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes, sure. Well, in June of 2002, the President laid out a very important vision for how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could be resolved, but he said that basically the actors are going to have to make some fundamental choices, fundamental choices on the part of the Palestinians about ending terror and building democratic institutions and, at that time, finding new leadership.

He talked about fundamental choices that the Israelis were going to have to make about creating conditions in which a new Palestinian state could emerge, and, indeed, that meant that the Israelis were going to have to recognize that there was going to have to be land for -- contiguous land for this Palestinian state to exist on. And he talked about the responsibility of Arab states to end incitement and to support the peace process and for all of us to recognize that peace and security and democracy and an end to terror all go together.

The good thing about the last couple of months has been that I think you're starting to see the parties make good, fundamental choices. And as they make those good, fundamental choices, it opens up the possibility of getting back on the roadmap toward a two-state solution.

I don't think any of us doubt that without a Palestinian state that is viable, that can represent the aspirations of the Palestinian people, that there really isn't going to be a peace for either the Palestinian people or for the Israelis. And so we're going to be -- over the next several months, I'm going to Israel and to the West Bank on this trip that I'm going on. We're going to be working with the parties, now that they've begun to make those fundamental choices, to push

forward toward the date when we have a two-state solution. And I think it's in our grasp, although it's still something that has to be worked toward vigilantly.

Yes.

QUESTION: Good morning, Secretary Rice. My name is Eric Nelson. I work in the Bureau of Administration. Last week when you arrived, in your first speech to us, you talked about the importance of diversity and that the State Department reflect the American population as a whole. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that and tell us what ideas you have for stimulating diversity on all levels of the Department.

SECRETARY RICE: Yes, thank you. I'm glad you asked the question. The first thing is to be aware of its importance, aware of the need for diversity. So, you know, if you look around and everybody looks like you, then start thinking maybe I should think a little bit differently about this. And so I'd just ask each and every person to think every day about how you can improve diversity.

No, it's not easy because in -- particularly in foreign affairs, it has not been an area in which there has been great diversity and you have to really work at it. But I'm going to tell you about how I got to Stanford University and I think it will tell you something about how I view diversity.

I got to Stanford University -- I was a Fellow in the Center for International Security and Arms Control. I'd come from the University of Denver. And about halfway through my stay at Stanford, they asked if I was interested in maybe coming on to the faculty in a temporary position. And I thought, well, they have a couple Soviet specialists already, what are they doing? I realized many years later, of course, that what they did was they saw a black woman Soviet specialist and they thought maybe this is a chance to increase our diversity.

Now, the fact of the matter is Stanford didn't get most its faculty from the University of Denver. Okay, let's be realistic. What does that say? That says that sometimes, to increase diversity, you have to look outside your normal channels, outside your normal pools. You can't just look at the same places that everybody else came from. And so like Colin Powell, who was very active with historically black colleges and the colleges serving Hispanics and the like, we are going to look outside our normal channels and our normal pools to identify good people who can be brought into our midst who have the basic -- the basics: you know, they're smart, they're devoted, perhaps haven't had the experiences that some have had inside of those pools. And that's how you increase diversity.

It is not -- and I want to say this five times over -- it is not a matter of lowering standards. And it is not a matter of taking people who are unqualified. (Applause.) That is an insult. That's an insult to people of color. That's an insult to women. Of course there are people who are qualified; you just have to find them. And so a lot of diversity is finding people outside your normal channels, and we'll be making a big effort at doing that. (Applause.)

I can only take one more, I'm told. Okay, you're it. Sorry. Look, if you had questions that you didn't get a chance to ask, just jot them down, get them to -- is Brian over there? -- Brian Gunderson, Chief of Staff, and I'll get you an answer. Okay? Great. Go right ahead.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, my name is Anne Seshadri. I work in EAP Public Diplomacy. And I think we're

very heartened by the mention you've made of public diplomacy in your testimony and your meetings to date; however, in EAP, our budget has actually been cut this year and, as you know, EAP includes countries like Indonesia, which is the world's largest Muslim population, and also strategic countries such as China and Japan.

So my question is: How can we continue to engage foreign publics and win support for our policies if our public diplomacy resources are shrinking instead of growing?

SECRETARY RICE: Well, thank you for the question. I don't know the specific circumstances, but I will say that obviously we have to be able to reach out to people and we have to have resources to do it. Indonesia is one of several countries that is extremely important, a moderate Islamic population, huge Islamic population. When we talk about outreach to the Muslim world, Indonesia is one of the countries that we talk about.

So let me make the broader point. Public diplomacy -- everybody talks about public diplomacy. We're doing some very good things in public diplomacy. And I just don't want it to be thought that when one talks about the need to improve public diplomacy that one doesn't recognize the many very good things that are already going on.

But we obviously, after the end of the Cold War, we didn't keep in place a number of our strongest assets. We sort of thought, well, we've done that and we've won the Cold War. We now have the struggle of our lives in trying to -- a struggle of generations -- in trying to overcome the ideologies of hatred that are brewing in parts of the world, ideologies of hatred so great that people drove airplanes into our buildings on a fine September day. That's hatred. Ideologies of hatred so great that young women strap suicide vests onto themselves and blow up other young women of their same age.

Somehow, those ideologies have to be challenged, and they have to be challenged by freedom and liberty. They also have to be challenged by truth-telling. Public diplomacy is not spin. Public diplomacy worked in the Cold War because Voice of America and Radio Free Europe were known to tell the truth. That's why public diplomacy worked.

And so that's what we're going to do. We're going to find the means and the mechanisms to get messages out to people that are true. We're going to find the means and the mechanisms to engage people through cultural diplomacy and through exchanges so that we're going there and they're coming here. We're going to also be a bully pulpit for the rest of America doing its job. People like me were trained to speak Russian because we were told, well, this was a critical language and the best and the brightest speak Russian. We're not doing enough to train Arabic speakers and Farsi speakers and people who know the cultures of the Islamic world.

So this is a broad effort on our part and it's a broad effort on the part of the country. It will be very central to what we do and we can all engage in this effort because there's nothing more important than challenging now these ideologies of hatred that are at the root of our security problem.

So thank you very much for being with me. And again, if you had questions, get them to Brian. I'll answer them.

(Applause.)

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