



U.S. Department of State

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Introduction

When President Obama took office in 2009, the United States was engaged in two costly wars, faced the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, and had a diminished standing with many of our allies and partners around the world. The starting point for this Presidency was one of the toughest I have ever seen in my decades of public service.

Over the past eight years, President Obama laid a stronger foundation for American leadership in the world – recognizing that our power is rooted not just in our unparalleled military might, but also in our economic vitality and innovation, the depth and breadth of our global relationships, and the strength of our values.

The President has rightly said that the most consequential decisions any leader has to make are those related to war and peace. I learned at a young age that the use of force is sometimes necessary, but that diplomatic solutions are almost always preferable – in part because of the unforeseen consequences that military action often entails. At the State Department, I have been proud to lead the 70,000 dedicated public servants who spend their days advancing the cause of peace and security. All over the world, our diplomats work to keep the American people safe, strengthen our global leadership, enhance relations with our foreign counterparts, expand opportunities for our citizens and our businesses, and defend and advance universal values.

The stark and bipolar divide of the Cold War that I grew up with has long since disappeared. But we are confronted today by a globe that is no less dangerous and far more complex – where the power to influence events is broadly dispersed and change is at least as likely to be driven from the bottom as from the top. We live in a world where people can communicate instantly across virtually every border, and yet our ability to understand and respond to that information has not kept pace. Technology has brought the world closer, but has also enabled messages of divisiveness and hate to be spread with the click of a button. Non-state actors compete with national governments for influence, while violent extremists have declared war on civilization itself. The world is more prosperous than it has ever been, and yet the split between rich and poor is a rising challenge in almost every country.

Over the past eight years, this churning has made the job of shaping world events more complicated and raised complex questions about how governments can successfully perform their most basic functions – from enforcing laws, to providing public services, to enabling our citizens to pursue their dreams with hope and optimism. Some problems we face are relatively narrow in scope or confined to a particular region, but others – such as those posed by poor governance, climate change, and violent extremism – are global and generational in their demands and require from us both short-term actions and long-term strategies. More than ever, this era requires strong institutions and deft foreign policy to advance our values and interests.

Under President Obama's leadership, we have secured significant achievements that have made our country safer and improved the lives of millions of people around the world. And we've done it all with just one penny on the dollar of the federal budget – an incredible bargain for the American people, but also an amount that seems increasingly insufficient to address the global challenges we face.

It is a remarkable fact that when an emergency arises almost anywhere in the world, many countries think about responding, but only America is expected to. That expectation should be a source of pride to Americans – a burden we should not just accept but welcome as an opportunity.

In this time of great uncertainty in the world, it is not surprising that some Americans want to turn inward and search for ways to separate our own safety and prosperity from that of the international community. But it is folly to think we can build a more secure and prosperous future by hiding from the world or by severing our connections to it. International challenges must be confronted with honesty, determination and confidence – not isolation.

After traveling over a million miles to every continent and spending more than 500 days abroad in my time as Secretary, I've found that no matter where you go, there is simply no substitute for American leadership – in the face of aggression; in the cause of universal values; or in the service of a more sustainable, free, and prosperous world.

In other words, the United States remains what one of my predecessors called the world's indispensable nation. We are indeed exceptional – not because we say we are, but because we do exceptional things. As the Obama Administration draws to a close, I can say with confidence that the United States is more deeply engaged, in more places simultaneously, on more critical issues, with greater consequence than ever before in our nation's history.

Keeping the American People Safe

There is no more important job for our nation's leaders than keeping the American people safe. Our diplomats work every day to do just that, whether by negotiating with foreign counterparts, building international coalitions around a shared goal, helping to resolve violent conflicts, or working to prevent conflicts in the first place. After all, the most expensive peace is still cheaper than the least expensive war.

Drawing Down U.S. Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan

When President Obama took office, our armed forces were entangled in two of our nation's longest wars.

In Iraq – where 144,000 American troops were fighting in January 2009 – we have, over the course of eight years, ended a major ground war and built an enduring strategic partnership based on mutual respect and shared interests. The United States continues to help the Iraqi people train and equip a strong army to secure their own country, and we responded to the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) by assembling a broad coalition of international partners to support the Iraqi Security Forces in their effort to defeat ISIL. With courage and conviction, they are doing just that. We have also supported efforts to broaden the inclusivity of the Iraqi government, so that it can better represent the diversity of the Iraqi people and govern more effectively.

In Afghanistan, we refocused our resources to deal crippling blows to al-Qaeda core's senior leadership, we trained Afghan forces to take responsibility for their own security, and we helped the Afghan people build a more prosperous future. Today, the American troops that remain in Afghanistan are focused on training and advising Afghan forces and supporting counterterrorism operations. We have also surged our diplomatic efforts to support Afghanistan's government, including after the disputed presidential elections in 2014. At a time of great uncertainty that could easily have erupted into civil war, the United States helped forge agreement on an inclusive Government of National Unity to lead the country forward. Afghanistan is far from perfect, and it will take sustained engagement and effort in the years ahead to protect the progress we've made. But with our support, millions of Afghan boys – and particularly girls – who were not in school eight years ago are getting an education today. Afghans have cast their ballots in democratic elections and seen a peaceful transfer of power. We have invested

significant blood and treasure in Afghanistan's future, and we must continue to support the Afghan people as they work to build a secure and peaceful future in the months and years ahead.

All told, since taking office, President Obama has brought home about 160,000 troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Ending our combat missions and surging our diplomatic efforts in both of these countries allowed us to refocus our fight against the most direct threats to U.S. security. Thanks to the heroic efforts of our military, our diplomats, our intelligence community, and our development professionals, we remain strong and secure in our efforts to keep the American people safe.

Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Since his first day in office, President Obama has taken the fight directly to al-Qaeda and its affiliates, never hesitating to use force when necessary to protect the American people. President Obama made it a top priority from day one to go after Osama bin Laden and bring him to justice. Since 2009, we have decimated al-Qaeda core's senior leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan, including bin Laden, and we've targeted al-Qaeda's affiliates in Yemen, Somalia, and elsewhere. We must remain vigilant against this threat, but there should be no doubt that, after eight years of relentless counterterrorism efforts, the al-Qaeda that perpetrated 9/11 is today a shadow of what it was on January 20, 2009.

As our efforts to counter the threat of terrorism have evolved, so too have the tactics of our terrorist enemies – seen most dangerously in the rise of ISIL. That's why, over the last two years, we have assembled a 68-member global coalition to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL. This brutal terrorist organization has dramatically undermined stability not just in the Middle East but in other regions as well, and it poses a threat to international peace and security, including a direct threat to many of our key partners and our homeland. ISIL continues to commit gross, systematic abuses of human rights and violations of international law, and in my judgment, ISIL is responsible for genocide against groups in areas under its control (including Yazidis, Christians, and Shia Muslims). It is also responsible for crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing directed at these same groups and in some cases against Sunni Muslims, Kurds, and other minorities.

Our coalition to defeat ISIL draws on the expertise and efforts of each member state or organization. Some partners are involved in the military effort; others are working to impede the flow of foreign fighters. Some partners are involved in the effort to halt ISIL's financing and funding, while others are supporting the effort with critical humanitarian assistance.

We have made substantial progress in the effort to defeat ISIL and dismantle its so-called caliphate. In Iraq, ISIL controls less than 61 percent of the territory it once held. The Iraqi Army, supported by the coalition, is advancing in the effort to liberate Mosul, and the coalition will soon launch the effort to liberate Raqqa from ISIL's reign of terror. In Syria, ISIL has lost over 28 percent of the territory it once held. In Libya, we have helped government-aligned forces to clear ISIL out of Sirte, which the group once dominated. We continue to work with partners across the globe to confront the threat of ISIL wherever it exists.

We have fought ISIL and other terrorists not only on the military battlefield, but also in the digital space where these terrorists recruit fighters, raise money, and radicalize their followers to violence. The State Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) not only counters ISIL's dark call, but also lifts up the voices of our partners, including community and religious leaders in areas affected by ISIL, to share their own experiences and advance a more positive vision of the future. The GEC has also pioneered an innovative program to serve anti-ISIL internet ads to those seeking out information on them. Thanks to our efforts, along with our partners, the volume of ISIL's tweets is now down by more than 50 percent, and anti-ISIL content now outnumbers pro-ISIL content four-to-one on social media.

The fight against ISIL and violent extremism more broadly is a generational challenge that cannot be won overnight. It will require efforts on the battlefield and online, today and in years to come. But I am absolutely confident that, working with our coalition partners, we will win this fight and ISIL will be defeated.

Verifiably Preventing Iran from Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon

In 2009, Iran was marching forward on the path toward being able to acquire enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon, and the world was divided over how to confront this growing threat to international security. While the United States had a full range of options available to us, we knew that a diplomatic solution was the most durable and verifiable way to ensure we met President Obama's pledge to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

Leading with diplomacy, the United States painstakingly brought the world together – including countries like Russia and China – in an unprecedented coalition to establish an international sanctions regime intended to change Iran's calculus. At the United Nations Security Council, we led the effort to impose the toughest multilateral sanctions in history on Iran. And working closely with Congress, we expanded our unilateral sanctions as well, all with the goal of bringing Iran to the negotiating table.

Sanctions alone could not have ended the threat from Iran's nuclear program, nor were they intended to do so. Even as its program continued to advance, installing 19,000 centrifuges and stockpiling enough enriched uranium to make several bombs, the objective was always to test whether the increased pressure had made a negotiated solution possible and to ultimately avoid the need for war.

Given the history of mistrust and the serious issues at stake, we knew this would be a tough challenge. After reaching out to Iran through bilateral channels and more than two and a half years of intense multilateral negotiations, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, China, the European Union and Iran agreed on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an agreement that has verifiably cut off all of Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon.

Before the JCPOA, Iran was under 90 days away from having the material necessary to produce one nuclear weapon. Today, because of the JCPOA, they are at least a year away – and the unprecedented transparency measures allow us to know almost immediately if Iran fails to comply, giving us plenty of time to act. Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium has been reduced by 98 percent – not anywhere close to what's needed to make a single nuclear weapon. Iran has removed two-thirds of its installed centrifuges from its nuclear facilities, along with the infrastructure that supported them, and those materials are sealed under continuous monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran has halted all uranium enrichment at its underground Fordow facility, and removed all fissile material from the site. Iran has removed the Arak reactor's core and filled it with cement, ensuring that it can never be used again. All of this is subject to the most extensive transparency and verification regime ever negotiated. The IAEA now also has visibility and accountability of the entire supply chain that supports Iran's nuclear program, from start to finish.

Pursuant to the JCPOA, the United States and our partners have, in turn, lifted nuclear-related sanctions on Iran – the sanctions we put in place precisely to reach this kind of diplomatic solution. This has created opportunities and the prospect of a better future for the Iranian people. As for the Iranian government, while we have made clear we are open to a different future should its many objectionable policies change, it has yet to demonstrate a willingness to do so. Our relationship remains highly contentious – and we must maintain our pressure and continue to push back on Iran's missile program, its support for

terrorism, its disregard for human rights, and its destabilizing interference in the affairs of its neighbors as long as these threats persist.

In reaching and implementing this deal, we took a major security threat off the table without firing a single shot. The United States, our partners and allies in the Middle East (including Israel), and the entire international community are safer today because of the JCPOA.

Confronting North Korea's Nuclear Program

The threat posed by North Korea's nuclear program is among the gravest our country faces today. The United States does not, and never will, accept North Korea as a nuclear state. North Korea's provocative and destabilizing actions have isolated and impoverished its people, and it continues to flagrantly violate numerous UN Security Council resolutions.

Thanks to our efforts at the United Nations Security Council, we are handing off to the next Administration a strong foundation for increasing pressure on Pyongyang that will be critical to address this threat. Twice this year, the UN Security Council came together to pass the toughest resolutions ever on North Korea, in an attempt to get Pyongyang to change its course. In the coming months, we must remain steadfast – through diplomacy, deterrence, and pressure – to build a sustained, comprehensive, and relentless campaign that increases the costs on North Korea until it makes a strategic decision to return to serious talks on denuclearization and complies with its international obligations.

Preventing the Spread and Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Beyond Iran and North Korea, President Obama's efforts to put non-proliferation at the center of our foreign policy efforts – beginning with his speech in 2009 in Prague – have resulted in tangible results during the last eight years, which will help ensure the security of future generations from the unfathomable threat of nuclear attack or war.

In the four Nuclear Security Summits – beginning with the first in 2010 in Washington, D.C., the largest gathering of world leaders since the founding of the United Nations – we have focused high-level attention on the threat of nuclear terrorism and enhancing and elevating how we secure nuclear materials and prevent nuclear smuggling. These summits have resulted in concrete plans and actions to achieve key nuclear security goals by countries around the world.

We have also taken steps with respect to our own stockpiles, most significantly with the signing of the New START Treaty with Russia, which put both of our countries on track to reduce our nuclear stockpiles to their lowest levels since the era of Eisenhower and Khrushchev. In the five years since the Treaty was signed, it has given us the confidence and level of oversight we need – and could not otherwise have – by allowing U.S. inspectors unprecedented access to Russian nuclear facilities. This historic accord continues the great bipartisan tradition of responsible nuclear arms reductions that began during the Cold War, which make the world more secure.

When countries have violated international law and norms that govern these types of weapons, we have also acted. After the Syrian regime horrifically used chemical weapons on its own people in August 2013, we led the world to come together to remove and destroy Syria's declared stockpile of chemical weapons. Working with Russia, the United Nations, and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the United States helped remove 1,000 tons of chemical weapons from Syria and dismantled much of Syria's chemical weapons program. Removing these weapons from Syria ensured that they could not be used – by the Asad regime or by terrorist groups like ISIL – but unfortunately other

undeclared chemical weapons continue to be used ruthlessly on the Syrian people. While we have made progress, we cannot and will not rest until the Syrian people can no longer be gassed and terrorized by these vicious weapons.

Earlier this year, the United States also took significant steps to remove Libya's remaining chemical weapons precursors, as part of an international operation led by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons that included Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Libya, Malta, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Removing those precursors ensured that these chemical weapons precursors did not fall into the wrong hands and will not be used against the Libyan people or anyone else.

Protecting Our Planet

Climate change is not just a threat to the future of our planet, but a growing and immediate threat to our national security and the lives and livelihoods of people across the globe.

For many years, scientists have laid out the clear case that climate change is real, shown us that it is happening now, and, barring global action to change the course our planet is on, warned us of its devastating impacts in nearly every corner of the world. I have spent the better part of my professional life focused on fighting climate change and have seen the international community warned time and again, only to fall far short of the kind of worldwide action that will make a difference.

In 2009, the world was divided over whether climate change even constituted a global threat, and if so, how to deal with it. The same bitter debate between developing countries and developed countries continued to hinder progress. I came to this job determined to raise the profile of climate change to reflect the urgency of the threat. Meeting by meeting, phone call by phone call, the State Department's top officials made sure climate change was addressed in virtually every bilateral relationship.

As a result of years of deliberation and negotiations, we and our partners finally cemented an international consensus around how to address climate change and laid the foundation for ambitious global efforts to confront this challenge. Other high-emissions countries, like China and India, have gone from adversaries on these issues to partners in finding ambitious solutions. If we can build on this course in the decades to come, there is at least a chance that our children and our grandchildren will look back at the last years of this Administration as the moment the world finally woke up to the threat, and they can take pride in America's role in taking the global actions necessary to change the course of our planet's history.

The joint announcement that President Obama made with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing in November 2014 paved the way to Paris the following December, when nearly 200 nations made history by reaching the most ambitious, inclusive climate agreement ever negotiated. We overcame the divisions that doomed past attempts. Countries large and small each made individual commitments to reduce their own contributions to climate change. Less than one year later, the agreement entered into force, enabling the world to turn its attention to implementing the text we negotiated. We showed that with U.S. leadership, climate change is a challenge that can be met. Moreover, with this global agreement, we sent the private sector an unmistakable signal about the unprecedented economic opportunities that the global clean energy market offers.

Over the past year, the Paris Agreement was complemented by other major achievements in the fight against climate change. In October 2016 in Kigali, the nearly 200 parties to the Montreal Protocol negotiated an amendment to phase down the use and production of the potent greenhouse gases known as hydrofluorocarbons. According to scientists, this agreement could avoid up to half a degree Celsius of

global warming by the end of the century, and American businesses are already seizing on the new opportunities for more innovative, cleaner technologies that meet these standards.

That same month, the International Civil Aviation Organization adopted an unprecedented global market-based measure that puts the international aviation industry on a path toward sustainable, carbon-neutral growth. This builds on over a decade of work by the United States and other states to reduce global aviation emissions by developing new technologies, improved operations, and sustainable alternative fuels. Such a step by an industry sector is unprecedented, and we hope and expect that others will now follow suit in adopting such an approach.

In my time as Secretary of State, I am also proud of the work we have done to safeguard our oceans, which, despite being essential to life on Earth, are severely threatened by climate change, overfishing, and pollution. In 2014, I hosted the first global Our Ocean conference, and since then the international community has come together to commit over \$9.2 billion to protect our ocean. In that same time, nations have committed over 11 million square kilometers of ocean for protection – an area roughly the size of the continent of Africa. In 2016 alone, the United States designated the world’s second-largest marine protected area through the expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in the Pacific Ocean, and we also designated the very first marine national monument in the Atlantic Ocean. In October, after years of negotiations, 25 governments including the United States approved the creation of the world’s largest marine protected area in Antarctica’s Ross Sea – an act that will safeguard one of the last unspoiled ocean wilderness areas on the planet. Together, these efforts account for the most significant actions to protect our ocean in history, and they will benefit our planet for generations to come.

Climate change is no longer a niche issue to be addressed by experts far from the corridors of power. Today, thanks to President Obama’s leadership, it is a fixture on the international agenda and a top national security and foreign policy priority for the United States. There is much more work to do, and the months and years ahead will be critical to the success of our efforts. We can build on the foundation of Paris by helping ensure countries take action in a manner that supports their development and the U.S. economy, and we can lead the world in developing and deploying the clean technologies that will create jobs and drive major investment over the coming decades. The international community expects nothing less – and will react in a highly unfavorable manner if we abdicate our responsibility. Thanks to the work of the last eight years, we have laid a strong foundation for overcoming the climate challenge and building a better future for our planet.

Supporting Efforts to End Conflicts

The United States plays an indispensable role in helping to de-escalate and ultimately end conflicts around the globe. In today’s world, there’s nothing foreign about these foreign conflicts anymore. What happens in a faraway country or region has spillover effects, including, in many cases, here in the United States. Just as we have used military force when we must to defend the American people and our way of life, we have made it a priority to prevent the escalation and spread of armed conflicts that not only cause untold humanitarian suffering, but also, in many cases, threaten U.S. national security interests.

We have seen that ending wars is far more difficult than starting them. Historically, it can take years for peace proposals to mature and for conditions on the ground to ripen for a political solution. But no matter how vexing a conflict may be, peace always requires perseverance and perspective. We approach each conflict around the world with humility, mindful of our own interests and the fact that these conflicts must ultimately be solved by the parties most directly involved. But we also know that in many

of these conflicts, the United States can play a critical role in helping resolve them that no other country can.

No conflict is more complex or challenging than the one in **Syria**, which has led to the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II. The longer the war goes on, the more dire the humanitarian situation becomes. Ultimately, there is no military solution to this conflict; any lasting end to the war must be political. That's why we have continued to expend every effort, with all the key international players, to try to reduce the violence and increase humanitarian access for the Syrian people, which will help create the climate for serious negotiations between the parties to finally end the war. We believe that Bashar al-Asad has lost all legitimacy to lead Syria, and that a political transition is therefore required to bring about the future the Syrian people deserve. None of us will be satisfied while this conflict continues to rage, nor will we apologize for refusing to relent in the pursuit of diplomatic solution to what is the greatest human catastrophe on the planet.

In **Yemen**, the United States has endeavored to support a peace process, facilitated by the United Nations, to find an immediate end to the conflict. Throughout the conflict, we have provided support to protect the security of Saudi Arabia from the threat on its southern border. Even as we do so, we know that there is no military solution to this conflict. This war has caused considerable destruction in Yemen and suffering for its people across the country; it has distracted our partners from the fight against ISIL and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, which poses a threat to the U.S. homeland; and it continues to kill far too many civilians. The United States must continue to press all sides to reduce the violence, increase humanitarian access, and negotiate a political solution to end this war as soon as possible.

In **Libya**, since the fall of Muammar al-Qadhafi, the United States has worked to support the Libyan people as they build a Government of National Accord that is inclusive and can address the full range of Libya's political, security, economic, and humanitarian challenges across the entire country. We have brought the international community together to strengthen the Government and to support its efforts to unify the Libyan people. Libya has an opportunity to be a safe country for its citizens, one with a functioning government, an entrepreneurial economy, and a population that is both diverse and unified at the same time. Or, it could turn into a safe haven for terrorists, trapped in division and chaos and beset by personal, international, and tribal rivalries. The choices to shape Libya's future are in the hands of its leaders and its people. They need our support, and we and our partners must continue to seize the initiative to support their efforts in the months and years ahead.

The United States has continued to stand with **Ukraine** as it pursues the sovereign and democratic future that its people deserve. In the face of Russia's aggression in eastern Ukraine and its illegal occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea, Ukraine has worked to build stronger and more effective political, economic, and security institutions. The United States has stood with Ukraine as it strengthens its democracy, and we and our European partners have continued to press for the full implementation of the Minsk agreement to end the conflict in Donbas and return the conflict zone and the international border to Ukrainian control. Because of Russia's actions to destabilize Ukraine, we and our partners put in place sanctions on Russia's financial, energy, and defense sector, which have had a significant effect on Russia's economy. We have also made clear that if Russia implements its commitments, these sanctions can be rolled back.

In our hemisphere, the United States has been **Colombia's** steadfast partner, through Administrations and Congresses of both parties, as the Colombian people defended their democracy and pursued the just and lasting peace that they deserve. After over fifty years of conflict that has claimed more than 220,000 lives, and after four years of difficult negotiations, the Colombian congress approved – by a substantial margin – the peace accord negotiated between the Colombian Government and the FARC. We believe this accord will help achieve a just and lasting peace for all Colombians, and we stand ready to support

the accord's implementation.

On **Israeli-Palestinian** peace, we have remained committed to realizing the vision of a two-state solution: a secure, democratic Jewish state of Israel living side-by-side with an independent, viable and contiguous Palestinian state. During my time in office, we worked very hard to restart negotiations between the two sides to see if progress was indeed possible. Unfortunately, the parties were not willing to make the difficult choices necessary to move forward with the negotiations. Since then, we have been calling on the parties to demonstrate with policies and actions a genuine commitment to the two-state solution and to create the conditions for the resumption of successful negotiations. I sincerely hope for the future of both Israelis and Palestinians alike that their leaders will make the difficult choices necessary to advance the prospects for peace.

In **Cyprus**, we have remained focused on finding a fair and lasting solution to the longstanding division of the island. Cypriot leaders have demonstrated tremendous dedication, persistence, and perseverance in pursuit of an agreement on a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation, and we are closer than ever to helping to achieve a reunified Cyprus.

This administration has strongly supported the people of **South Sudan** in their efforts to build an independent, peaceful, and prosperous nation, including by playing a leading role in welcoming the new country into the community of nations in 2011. Unfortunately, since its independence, the promise for which the people of South Sudan suffered and sacrificed so much has been marred by conflict. In August 2015, the United States and our regional partners forged a peace agreement that led to the formation of a transitional unity government, but this agreement gave way to another round of bitter fighting that continues today, worsening an already perilous humanitarian situation. Moving forward, the solution to the senseless tragedy in South Sudan ultimately relies on more robust and urgent engagement of its leaders from all parties and ethnic groups, supported by the United States and neighboring states.

Strengthening Our Alliances, Partnerships, and International Institutions

The United States is more respected in the world than we were eight years ago, in large part because we have worked hard to rebuild and strengthen our alliances all across the globe. We also have demonstrated unprecedented leadership in strengthening and modernizing global and regional institutions to make them more capable of addressing today's threats and challenges. Our allies and partners are force-multipliers, enabling us to make progress on multilateral issues where acting alone would not achieve our objectives.

Leading at the United Nations

At the United Nations, the United States has brought together coalitions to isolate and condemn those who violate international norms, and to respond to global challenges like the refugee crisis, Ebola, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation. We have built effective and unprecedented sanctions regimes on the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs. We have also strengthened the UN's own capacity to respond to global challenges by modernizing UN institutions and their management, expanding UN engagement on issues like LGBTI rights, and strengthening important UN tools such as peacekeeping and humanitarian relief.

Reinvigorating Our Alliances in Europe

Over the last eight years, we have reinforced our transatlantic alliances as the cornerstone of our engagement in the world. The United States maintains a profound commitment to a Europe that is free, whole, and at peace. Our work with Europe leverages our strong and historic bilateral relationships throughout the continent. A strong Europe is our indispensable partner not just on bilateral and regional issues, but also on tackling global security challenges, promoting global prosperity, and upholding international norms. Amid transformational challenges posed by the United Kingdom's referendum on leaving the European Union, Russian aggression in Ukraine and beyond, and a continent-wide migration crisis, we remain overwhelmingly confident in the future of our partners of first resort and as committed as ever to supporting both a strong United Kingdom and a strong European Union.

NATO remains the strongest alliance the world has ever known, and our Article 5 commitment to the collective defense of all NATO Members is ironclad. We stand by our NATO allies, as they have stood by us – including after we were attacked on 9/11. Today, every single NATO ally and every member of the EU is contributing to the campaign to defeat ISIL. The many accomplishments of institutions such as the EU, NATO, and the OSCE are only partly attributable to the resources they command. The real source of their strength resides in the democratic ideals and principles that define their purpose. That's why these institutions have earned our loyalty and respect for so long – and it's why they deserve our continued support today and going forward.

During President Obama's first term, the United States and Russia reset our relationship, which led to tangible benefits on nuclear arms control and supply routes for our troops in Afghanistan. In discrete areas, we have retained our ability to work together on areas of shared interest, such as negotiating the JCPOA, protecting maritime areas, and coordinating on Arctic issues. Still, the United States and Russia continue to have strong disagreements on a range of issues as well. In the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine, we have led an international effort to support the Ukrainian people and to impose economic sanctions on Russia for its illegal actions. We also launched a major deterrence initiative that ensures that we will maintain our capability, readiness, and responsiveness to address any threat and to deter further destabilizing activities. Russia's unprecedented cyber intrusions and its military intervention in Syria have also posed significant challenges to both our bilateral relationship and to international stability, and it is critical that we remain vigilant against these and other threats, even as we look for areas where it is in our interest to cooperate with Russia.

Rebalancing to Asia

Since 2009, we have rebalanced our foreign policy to reflect the growing importance of the Asia-Pacific region to U.S. interests. With nearly half of the world's population, one-third of global GDP, and some of the world's most capable militaries, the Asia-Pacific is increasingly the world's political and economic center of gravity. That's why we have strengthened our treaty alliances with Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Australia, while maintaining our long-standing alliances with Thailand and the Philippines. We have deepened our partnerships with India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam. Over the last eight years, we have strengthened the region's institutional architecture to reinforce a rules-based order, including in the maritime arena. We have broadened people-to-people ties and promoted higher standards on trade and investment. We have also opened a new chapter in our relationship with Burma, lifting sanctions as they have made significant progress on human rights and governance, including its first democratically elected civilian-led government in over 50 years.

In our relationship with China, the most consequential of our bilateral relationships in the world today, we have built on the positive and productive relationship that President Obama established with President Xi to expand cooperation on a range of global challenges such as clean energy and health, including paradigm-shifting cooperation in reducing the threat of climate change. We have also worked together to increase stability in states like Afghanistan, confront global health epidemics, and address development challenges. However, we still have areas of vigorous disagreement, including on cybersecurity, human rights, and disputes in the East and South China Seas. In the years ahead, there is perhaps no more important issue on the U.S.-China agenda than North Korea's increasingly destabilizing and provocative behavior.

We have also deepened our cooperation on commerce, defense, global health, counterterrorism, education, medicine, cyber security, climate, and much more with India. As the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy, the United States and India share common values that bind us together, and our relationship has evolved from one with great potential to one that is achieving great things for both countries and the world. This will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century, and the United States should continue to work with India to expand the vast areas of cooperation between our nations and our peoples.

Strengthening Partnerships and Addressing Instability in the Middle East

In the Middle East, the security relationship between the United States and Israel is stronger than it has ever been. This administration has provided more security support to the State of Israel than any other in history. Our unwavering commitment to Israel's security has included missile defense funding like the Iron Dome system, which has saved lives by shooting down rockets headed towards Israeli cities. This year we signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding, which ensures a stable and unprecedented level of security assistance for Israel over the next decade. We have also steadfastly, year after year, defended Israel from biased resolutions at the United Nations and other multilateral fora. The United States and Israel share a deep and abiding bond, and our actions throughout President Obama's tenure have demonstrated – through word and deed – that the alliance between our nations is indeed unshakeable.

The United States continues to hold strong security partnerships with critical partners like Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf countries. Since President Obama's summit at Camp David with the Gulf Cooperation Council nations, we have redoubled our efforts to support the defense of these partners, including through increased security assistance, training, and advising. We have pushed back on Iran's destabilizing behavior in the region, including its support of terrorist groups. And we continue to cooperate with the GCC on issues including maritime security, counterterrorism, and border security.

Throughout the Middle East and North Africa, the Arab Spring unleashed a wave of complex challenges for both leaders and citizens across the region. Catalyzed by a growing youth bulge, new technologies like social media, and economies and governance structures that failed to keep up with the demands of every-day citizens, thousands protested on the streets from Tunis to Cairo to Damascus, demanding increased opportunity for themselves and their families. In the face of these protests, some Arab leaders stepped (or were swept) aside, others weathered the storm, and some sent armed forces to quell the protests by any means, imprisoning or even killing thousands of their own citizens.

The United States has sought to support the legitimate aspirations of those in the Arab world seeking more inclusive governance and economic opportunity. The pace of change varies from country to country, but beyond all the complicating factors that influence events in the region, there is also something fairly basic going on – a struggle that transcends any distinction of national or religious identity, between people who are intent on opening wounds and those who want to close them. It is this

struggle between destroyers and builders that informs every aspect of United States policy in the Middle East, including the long-term partnerships we forge, the diplomacy we undertake, and the ideals and values we support. This is the glue that holds the components of our strategy together. Our goal is to help ensure that builders and healers throughout the region have the chance they need to accomplish their tasks. This is a struggle to which we are deeply committed for the simple reason that the outcome is vital to our interests.

Deepening Cooperation in the Americas

For over fifty years, our efforts to isolate Cuba failed to advance our objective of empowering Cubans to build an open and democratic country. In fact, it was often the United States – not Cuba – that was left isolated by this policy.

That’s why President Obama decided it was time for a new approach that would enhance our engagement with the Cuban people and better support their aspirations. Over the last two years, we have reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba, reopened our Embassy in Havana, and advanced engagement efforts on a number of fronts. For the first time in fifty years, we have reestablished direct commercial flights and direct mail flights between the United States and Cuba. We have lifted the restrictions on certain Cuban products, opened doors for cooperation in mutually-beneficial areas such as marine protected areas and health, and facilitated an expansion of authorized travel to Cuba. We continue to support improved human rights and democratic reforms in Cuba and are confident that this new approach will be a more effective way to do so.

Going forward, if we want to deepen the connections that bind our nations and our peoples, it is critical for Congress to lift the embargo on Cuba, an outdated burden on the Cuban people that continues to impede U.S. interests. Over time, we believe greater engagement will serve the interests of both the American people and Cuban people, and provide a better foundation for growth and progress in the relationship between our countries.

Our new relationship with Cuba has also removed an irritant in our relationships throughout the Western Hemisphere. Throughout this administration, we have worked to advance a Western Hemisphere that is prosperous, secure, democratic, and that plays a greater global role. For the first time in the history in this region, the number of people in the middle class has surpassed the number living in poverty. We maintain close partnerships with our neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and strong relationships with countries throughout the region, from Chile to Argentina to Colombia, where, with our quiet but steady support, they are closer than ever to ending the planet’s longest running civil war. We remain deeply engaged in the region, alongside key partners, to address the humanitarian situation in Venezuela. We are also working with our Central American partners to put that region on a course to sustained, broad-based economic growth, better government performance, and improved security conditions. And in the years ahead we should continue to forge partnerships throughout the Western Hemisphere rooted in mutual respect and shared values.

Investing in the Future of Africa

Over the last eight years, we have made significant investments towards ending violence, building strong institutions, and advancing opportunity and sustainable development in Africa. President Obama’s first-ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, held in 2014, was the centerpiece of this engagement. For the first time, fifty African leaders came to Washington to discuss a broad range of issues under the theme of “Investing in the Next Generation.” Consistent with that goal, we have increased our trade and business ties with Africa through the creation of initiatives such as Trade Africa and Power Africa, and we secured

Congressional authorization for the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) for the next ten years. Launched by President Obama in 2013, with an initial U. S. Government commitment of \$7 billion, Power Africa’s goal is to add 30,000 megawatts (MW) and 60 million connections in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. Three years since its launch, Power Africa has generated significant international momentum to support Africa’s energy sector development and has built a broad coalition of more than 130 public and private sector partners who have committed to invest more than \$54 billion toward this ambitious goal. In 2016, thanks to strong support from Congress, President Obama signed the Electrify Africa Act of 2015 into law, institutionalizing Power Africa and sending a strong signal to the global community that the U.S. Government’s commitment to expanding electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa will continue.

We have also significantly expanded our partnerships with Africans to address their most pressing needs and confront the threats they face. This includes supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia battling al-Shabaab and the Multi-National Joint Task Force working to defeat Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin. In addition, we have dramatically expanded our support for African capacity to respond to regional security challenges, including through more rapidly-deployable African peacekeepers. Perhaps the greatest threat the continent has faced in recent memory – the deadly Ebola virus – was kept at bay through a rapid response and strong collaboration between the United States, partners in Africa, and others in the international community.

We also continue to assist in critical mediation efforts, such as those that generated a peace agreement in South Sudan. We remain deeply concerned about ongoing violence there, and firmly believe the South Sudanese, like people everywhere, deserve both reconciliation and justice for past atrocities.

Throughout the continent, we have also supported advances in democratic governance, most notably the peaceful election and transfer of power in Nigeria in 2015. Though Nigeria faces challenges from multiple directions, it remains a vitally important country to the future of the continent and the world, which is why we have invested heavily in a strong bilateral relationship.

Africa’s global importance and influence will only continue to grow in the years ahead, especially given its rapidly expanding and overwhelmingly young population. The investments made by this administration in Africa’s broad range of leaders – in government, the private sector, and among its youth – lays a strong foundation for continuing robust engagement.

Expanding Opportunities for our People and our Businesses

I have often said that economic policy is foreign policy. That’s why we have increasingly placed entrepreneurship and innovation at the center of our diplomatic efforts around the world – both as a way to promote growth and social and economic development, and to strengthen our national security and strategic leadership across the globe.

Elevating Entrepreneurship and Innovation Engagement

Entrepreneurship is a critical way to help provide the next generation with a better future. The values that accompany entrepreneurship – like fair competition and the free flow of ideas – are American values that we try to promote as well. That’s why President Obama launched the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in 2009 – with the most recent one bringing together 1500 entrepreneurs and investors from over

170 countries in Silicon Valley this year – and why that work will continue beyond President Obama’s tenure, with next year’s summit taking place in India.

Through the TechWomen initiative and the Global Innovation through Science and Technology Network, the State Department is providing resources to train the next generation of leaders in science, technology, engineering, and math from developing and emerging economies. We have launched an American Innovation Roadshow to connect Silicon Valley leaders with policymakers, business leaders, and young entrepreneurs around the world on how to foster entrepreneurship and inspire innovation. And through the Global Connect Initiative, we have advanced our efforts to close the digital divide and bring Internet access to at least an additional 1.5 billion people by 2020. We are doing this in partnership with more than 40 countries as well as development banks, major companies, technical experts, and civil society.

We have also increasingly engaged Silicon Valley in a number of ways: to forge public-private partnerships to develop creative solutions to foreign policy challenges (including countering violent extremism online); to leverage Silicon Valley expertise to help build global entrepreneurship ecosystems that bolster inclusive economic growth; to support our diplomats overseas as they seek to increase engagement in their countries with U.S. science, technology, and innovation communities; and to effectively channel, coordinate, and leverage the growing interest of foreign governments in Silicon Valley. This year, we also launched a U.S. Digital Service team within the Department to better deliver critical services to the public, including improvements to our visa system.

Deepening People-to-People Ties

One of our major priorities over the last eight years has been to advance our engagement not just with governments, but also with people around the world – especially with young people. In many countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa, Southeast Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, 60 to 65 percent of the populations are under the age of 30, 50 percent under the age of 21, and 40 percent under the age of 18. How we engage with young people around the world will shape our security, prosperity, and global leadership for decades to come.

Under this administration, we have welcomed a record number of international students – including more than one million in the 2015-2016 academic year – to study in the United States, generating more than \$35 billion that year alone for the U.S. economy. Through the Fulbright, Critical Language Scholarship, and other exchange programs, we have also worked to help American students study abroad, learn new languages, and experience vibrant cultures overseas.

Thanks to President Obama’s personal leadership, we have also built signature initiatives to invest in the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs through the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI), and Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTIIL). In this administration, we have helped 2000 young African leaders, 891 young Southeast Asian leaders, and 248 young Latin American leaders access the resources and the training and the networks needed to become the next generation of leaders in civil society, in business, and in government. Through the broader YALI network, we have reached nearly half a million people who receive access to online courses and gain a network of peers and mentors across the globe. These programs are some of the best investments we can make in the future, and I hope they will continue to inspire the next generation of leaders across the world.

Raising Trade Standards and Opening Markets for American Businesses

Ninety-five percent of customers in the world are outside the United States. If America is to grow, we must trade with the rest of the world. I recognize that the politics of trade are difficult. But I am absolutely convinced that trade and open markets benefit the United States and the American people. Raising standards around the world on labor issues, on the environment, and on human rights does not just advance universal values. It also levels the playing field for our businesses, so that Americans are not disadvantaged for treating workers with the respect they deserve.

The fact is that the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an agreement between the United States and 11 other countries, would unite nearly 40 percent of the global economy. It would open up markets for American businesses. It would lift incomes for American workers. It would abolish 18,000 foreign taxes on American goods that prevent our goods from entering into other countries. And it would underscore American leadership in one of the fastest growing regions in the world. Walking away from TPP would be a strategic mistake.

Likewise, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) would also raise standards and open markets for American businesses, fostering increased exports and good-paying jobs here in the United States. Such an agreement would also strengthen the deep and abiding bonds between the United States and Europe.

I know that a lot of people question the value of trade or point to trade as a reason for slow and unequal growth. Yet these claims are simply inaccurate; trade is not responsible for the complex economic challenges we face today. Just consider all the forces that go into shaping a modern economy: technology, capital, research, markets, natural resources, human resources, education, training, and infrastructure. These are the kinds of things that either drive an economy forward or hold it back. No one is promising that TPP and T-TIP will solve all of our social and economic challenges. But we can promise that by rejecting such agreements – by refusing to participate in them – our competitiveness will suffer, our economy will fall a step behind, and we will miss out on opportunities in some of the fast-growing markets on the planet.

Defending and Advancing Universal Values

Defending universal values abroad is related to every enduring national interest, and over the last eight years we have made significant progress on a range of issues related to democracy and human rights.

We have made **gender equality** a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. For the first time, we appointed a U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women’s Issues to ensure that gender equality is integrated into every-day diplomacy. We developed and implemented the first-ever strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence, launched the Let Girls Learn initiative to address adolescent girls’ secondary education globally, and supported women’s voices and perspectives in decision-making in countries affected by war and violence.

In an unprecedented effort to defend the rights of **LGBTI individuals**, we appointed the first-ever Special Envoy to Advance the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons. We mobilized international support for three historic United Nations resolutions embracing LGBTI rights and launched the Global Equality Fund, which has now spent over \$33 million in 80 countries in support of civil society efforts to advance the human rights of LGBTI persons.

As a nation of immigrants, we have a profound responsibility to help **refugees** fleeing the world’s worst horrors. The American people should be proud that we provide more assistance than any other country to refugees around the world. We must continue to support refugees, including by welcoming them to

our shores. We have rigorous security screenings in place, and refugees undergo the most stringent vetting of any travelers to our country. It would be a moral failing of the highest caliber to turn our backs on those in need – including and especially from countries like Syria and Iraq. That’s why this administration set a goal of resettling 10,000 Syrian refugees in the U.S. in fiscal year 2016. We exceeded this goal, granting refugee status to 12,587 Syrians. We have made clear that we can live our values and protect our people at the same time.

To further enlist our partners in addressing what is truly a global refugee crisis, President Obama chaired the Leaders Summit at the 2016 UN General Assembly. The Summit was a success on multiple fronts, with 52 governments and international organizations making strong commitments to increase humanitarian assistance \$4.5 billion over their 2015 levels, expand resettlement slots and other opportunities for lawful admissions, and advance policy changes in refugee host countries to broaden access to lawful work and education for refugees. We have also engaged with business leaders in private sector calls to action, which draw on the immense resources that companies can bring to bear to help refugees fleeing violence or oppression who cannot return home have fulfilling and productive lives in their new countries.

In response to the rise in **unaccompanied children from Central America** who were crossing into the United States, we have made a government-wide effort to manage the urgent humanitarian situation and to improve enforcement by partnering with our Central American counterparts in three key areas: combatting gang violence and strengthening citizen security, spurring economic development, and improving capacity to receive and reintegrate returned families and children. These efforts are aimed at stemming the flow of unaccompanied children, who rely on dangerous human smuggling networks and often become victims of violent crime or sexual abuse.

No single action would do more to reaffirm our commitment to international human rights norms and remove a recruiting tool for terrorists than closing the **Guantanamo Bay** detention facility. When President Obama took office, there were 242 detainees at Guantanamo. Today, there are 59, of whom 20 are approved for transfer. We have made significant progress in the effort to close the detention facility at Guantanamo, including through intense diplomatic efforts to resettle detainees judged acceptable for release to their home countries or third countries. We must ensure that the facility is finally closed as soon as possible.

Thanks to quiet but persistent American diplomacy, over 3,000 members of the exiled Iranian opposition group, the Mujahedin e-Khalq (**MEK**), were safely moved out of Camp Liberty in Iraq. The MEK had been targeted and shelled at Camp Liberty, and for years we worked to facilitate the transfer and resettlement of this group. Because of skillful, determined diplomacy by our team, this was a major humanitarian achievement.

We also led the international community to establish the first-ever UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in **North Korea** and put that issue on the permanent agenda of the United Nations Security Council. We launched the first-ever human rights-based sanctions regime on DPRK officials, including Kim Jong Un.

This administration has also elevated the importance of combatting **human trafficking**. Modern slavery is connected to a host of 21st century challenges, from environmental sustainability to advancing the lives of women and girls to combatting transnational organized crime. Wherever we find poverty and lack of opportunity – wherever the rule of law is weak, where corruption is most ingrained, where minorities are abused, and where populations can’t count on the protection of government – we find not just vulnerability to trafficking, but zones of impunity where traffickers can prey on their victims. That is why we issue an annual report covering 188 countries, which monitors trends and provides critical information on where progress is taking place and where further efforts are needed. Since 2009, 194

pieces of anti-trafficking legislation have been passed in countries around the world. Compared to 2009, the most recent reporting period saw 238 percent more prosecutions and 58 percent more convictions and victims identified. The State Department has trained more than 4,500 foreign counterparts on issues related to human trafficking, and we will not rest until we finally put an end to all forms of modern slavery.

Under President Obama's leadership, we have elevated the **fight against corruption** as a core human rights issue, and in 2016 launched an internationally funded consortium to support independent journalists and civil society organizations that investigate and expose kleptocracy around the world with a focus on exposing corruption in autocratic regimes. President Obama's leadership in launching the Open Government Partnership also provides us with an international platform for reformers committed to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens.

I used to be a prosecutor and I know how hard it is to hold people in positions of public responsibility accountable. But I also know how important it is. Corruption feeds organized crime. It gnaws away at nation-states. It facilitates environmental degradation, contributes to human trafficking, discourages honest and accountable investment, and undermines communities. To put it simply: Corruption destroys the future. So worldwide, we need to deepen the fight against corruption, and make that fight a global security priority of the highest order.

Promoting Global Health and Global Health Security

Over the last eight years, we have also made enormous strides in promoting global health and advancing global health security. On **Ebola**, we defied predictions two years ago when we mobilized the international community to save hundreds of thousands of people who were at risk. The predictions at the time were dire, with warnings that a million people would die if we did not aggressively confront the disease. The numbers never approached those levels because we acted decisively, sending 3,000 US troops to build health care delivery capacity in the countries in Africa where Ebola had taken hold, alongside doctors, nurses, and medical aides who provided courageous assistance to save lives.

We have also joined forces with the global health community to turn the tide in the fight against **HIV/AIDS**. I remember back in 1991 when Bill Frist and I joined together as the chairs of a Center for Strategic and International Studies Task Force. Back then, the primary response to HIV/AIDS was fear – fear of contracting it, fear of those who had it, fear in some cases of even learning about it or taking steps to contain and stop it. Two decades ago, an AIDS diagnosis was tantamount to a death sentence. Many predicted that the virus was beyond our control and that there was no way we could possibly turn the tide. Today, thanks to PEPFAR and our partnerships across the world, we are now on the cusp of seeing the first generation born free from AIDS in more than three decades.

With the crucial assistance we recently received from Congress, we must continue to address the **Zika** virus with all the energy that we have, because the prospect of becoming a parent should be a source of joy for everyone, everywhere, and not a source of fear.

We have also advanced our efforts to prepare for future outbreaks, including by launching the 55-country **Global Health Security Agenda**. Along with our partners across the globe, we are implementing \$1 billion in new assistance to identify preparedness gaps before an outbreak occurs, so that the international community is prepared to respond to these threats in the future.

Modernizing the State Department

In order for our diplomatic and development professionals to shape world events in an increasingly challenging international landscape, we need to provide the resources, processes, and security necessary for them to be effective. That's why I focused on key management challenges during my time as Secretary that strengthened our workforce and enhanced their abilities, and also ensured that our people and posts are safe and secure around the world.

Enhancing Embassy Security

Protection of our facilities and our people abroad has always been important, but in the aftermath of the Benghazi attacks, I knew it was critical to continue to update our processes to adapt to a more dangerous world. The State Department fully implemented nearly all recommendations of the Benghazi Accountability Review Board (ARB), as well as the recommendations of the two processes that evolved from it. These initiatives led to organizational changes that continually weigh our security risk against our need for presence overseas to advance our foreign policy goals and provide posts increased resources to address risks. Of particular note, the Department created a process for designating High Threat, High Risk (HTHR) Posts, which are evaluated at least once annually through a new Vital Post Validation Process, to ensure our personnel footprint is appropriate, given our national interests at a certain post and in light of the threat environment.

The Department has also augmented security capabilities overseas by expanding the Marine Security Guard (MSG) program to more posts and increasing detachment sizes at many preexisting units. We expanded the MSG program to include Marine Security Augmentation Units – Marines who can be deployed to an embassy or consulate in response to a deteriorating security environment. We have constructed state-of-the-art tactical security operations centers in key countries, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. We have also expanded training for employees to help prepare them for dangerous situations beyond those going to High Threat High Risk Posts. When combined with a more stringent evaluation of the need for our presence, these additional measures allow us to continue to do the Department's important work, even as a security environment starts to deteriorate.

Strengthening Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is an increasing vulnerability for the federal government and private industry around the world. The State Department continues to be an attractive target for our adversaries due to the information we store and share, as well as the ability for adversaries to cause political embarrassment or disadvantage to our national interests. After suffering a cyber breach in 2014, I directed efforts to rapidly secure our networks, systems, and applications, while still supporting critical business processes.

The Department's cybersecurity team prioritized and addressed the critical cyber vulnerabilities, as well as improved coordination across the Department. This team developed an enterprise Cybersecurity Strategy and in cooperation with U.S. Digital Service, DHS, and NSA we enhanced the security and stability of our systems with architecture and code upgrades, as well as ongoing monitoring, penetration testing, and code review. In order to ensure that our cybersecurity benefits from industry best practices, we regularly partner with private sector leaders and partner agencies. Thanks to these efforts, we have been able to significantly improve the performance, security, and integrity of our systems and applications.

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

To most effectively represent the United States to the world, the Department of State must have a workforce that is representative of the American people. When we foster a culture of diversity and inclusion, we are able to recruit, retain, and promote our country's best talent. Throughout this Administration, the State Department has bolstered efforts to identify, recruit, and hire on merit from the broadest, deepest pool of diverse candidates. I initiated a "call to service" campaign in which Department leaders, including myself, have raised the visibility of the State Department as an employer of choice, particularly among underrepresented audiences. We have also, for the first time, published our racial, gender, ethnic, and disability diversity statistics online. To improve retention, we are strengthening mentoring and professional development opportunities, pressing for the families of LGBTI officers to have the same protections overseas as families of other officers, and launched a centralized exit survey process for all employees separating from the Department to systematically capture reasons for attrition and address ways to improve retention. We developed and launched in-person and online unconscious bias training, prioritizing senior leaders, managers, and recruiters. And we have expanded the Pickering and Rangel Fellowships, which have proven to be important tools for building a diverse work force.

Modernizing Technology

The State Department is spread out across over two hundred posts around the world and throughout the United States, and faces some of the greatest technology challenges of any organization or government agency. State Department personnel often operate in areas with limited bandwidth, highly experienced hackers, and antiquated tools. These problems are exacerbated by a historic lack of Department-wide strategic planning to identify technology solutions that are cost-effective, meet business needs, and are secure. That's why we have restructured technology governance bodies, centralized cybersecurity oversight, increased our focus on user-centered design, and are working to attract the best tech talent in the country. The Department has increased its use of mobile technologies and cloud-based applications to better engage foreign audiences. We are also updating and standardizing our websites, utilizing data analytics to provide a better user experience and significantly measure the impact of our engagement.

Conclusion

The United States is more secure, more respected, and more engaged in the world than we were when President Obama took office eight years ago. We have brought the international community together to confront the most serious challenges we face and to seize the most significant opportunities that will shape our future. There is much more work to be done, but I am confident if the United States wisely invests our time, talent, and resources in global affairs, we will remain the indispensable nation that we are today.

After serving in public life for nearly four decades, I am aware that there are few more reliable – or damaging – applause lines than promising to slash the budgets of the State Department and USAID and "spend the money at home." Good applause lines don't always make good policy. We need to do a better job of making the case for recognizing how the relatively modest investments we make in diplomacy and development now can improve the world and enhance our own security for generations to come. The richest economy in the world cannot be content on putting only one penny on the dollar into this effort.

It is equally true that the United States cannot be strong abroad if we are not strong at home. I would put our democratic system, our vibrant economy, our respect for human rights, our system of justice, and our freedom of the press up against anyone else's in the world. I am often reminded during my travels overseas how lucky we are here in the United States, but I am also reminded of the awesome

responsibility – and the opportunity – we have to improve people’s lives in our own country as well. We cannot forget that everything we do to perfect our own union, and to live those values here at home, promotes those ideals overseas.

Despite the problems we face in the world, I firmly believe that we should look to the future with every ounce of the optimism that has always inspired and energized our nation. I’m not going to say that we’ve solved every problem. But I do know that American leadership has a lot to do with the fact that – worldwide – a child born today is more likely than ever before to be born healthy, more likely to be adequately fed, more likely to get the necessary vaccinations, more likely to attend school, and more likely to live a long and prosperous life. Compared to just 20 years ago, we have cut in half the number of mothers who die during childbirth and the number of infants who perish because of malnutrition. We’ve vastly expanded access to education for boys and girls. We’ve driven extreme poverty below 10 percent for the first time in history. There are still wars to end, diseases to cure, children to educate, and freedoms to promote and protect. But I remain an optimist and a believer in persistent American leadership and diplomacy – active, assertive, astute diplomacy.

American greatness is a fact but not an entitlement. It cannot be taken for granted. It must be demonstrated and earned by every generation. It demands the best from us, and the best within us. The world will be watching to see whether we – the American people – remain up to that challenge. There is not a scintilla of doubt in my mind that the answer is yes, but we will have to work at it, together, and make the investments that leaders have a responsibility to make.

Today’s State Department is a rewarding place to work because we have a unique country to represent, great things to accomplish, and a matchless set of colleagues by our side. I will always be grateful for the incredible opportunity I have been given to serve – it’s been the honor of my life. I send President Obama’s successor, and mine, all the best wishes as they embark on what will be a truly extraordinary journey representing the greatest country on earth.