

March 18, 2011

Friends and Colleagues:

When discussing the importance of global solutions to global challenges, I often note how our world is increasingly interconnected and interdependent. It is in times such as these, with Japan reeling from the triple catastrophes of recent days, and the continuing violence in Libya, that we most keenly feel that connection and see it revealed in the response of the international community.

For Japan, that response will be shaped by the evolving needs of the country. The United States has of course offered disaster relief assistance, and we are working closely with the Government of Japan to define and provide that assistance. Similarly, the United Nations and other international organizations are grappling with how to best provide assistance to the Japanese. For the International Atomic Energy Agency, for example, that includes dispatching a technical support team to assist with radiation containment efforts. IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano is also in Japan to consult further with Japanese officials.

The terrible circumstances faced by the Libyan people have only underscored the crucial necessity of multilateral institutions. Just last night, the Security Council underscored the international community's firm resolve by passing [Resolution 1973](#), a powerful measure designed to protect civilians as well as strengthen the pressure on the Gadhafi regime. This action follows the Council's adoption of an arms embargo on Libya, biting financial and travel sanctions on Gadhafi and his regime, and referral of his abuses to the International Criminal Court.

The U.S. is also working closely with the UN, the European Union, the Arab League, the African Union, and Libya's neighbors to respond to urgent [humanitarian needs](#). That work includes expanded support for the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and the World Food Program. As the violence in Libya continues, thousands of third country nationals have fled, requiring repatriation to their home countries. The United States is working with these countries, IOM, and other international partners to assist that repatriation effort.



UNHCR quickly established camp facilities in Tunisia such as this camp in Ras Djir for thousands fleeing violence in Libya.

Of course, action is also taking place outside the Security Council. In late February, I joined [Secretary Clinton in Geneva](#) at the UN Human Rights Council to urge that further action be taken by the Council to address horrific abuses of the Ghadafi regime. The Council unanimously adopted an international commission of inquiry to investigate human rights abuses by Gadhafi's regime, and four days later the UN General Assembly unanimously suspended Libya's HRC membership.

In addition to helping shape the U.S. response to the momentous happenings of recent weeks, I was also able to make a quick, productive trip to Israel and India to further enhance our multilateral cooperation with these nations.

In Israel, I participated in annual meetings with senior Israeli officials on pressing UN and multilateral issues. It is an ongoing priority for the Obama Administration to address the unbalanced and confrontational manner in which Israel is singled out for criticism across the UN system, and to ensure that Israel has the same rights and responsibilities as all states at the UN. I reiterated the Administration's unwavering position that the U.S. will oppose attempts to challenge the legitimacy of Israel at the United Nations or internationally.

My dialogue with Israeli officials also focused on a positive global agenda emphasizing areas of shared multilateral cooperation and new opportunities for our nations to address challenges such as climate change, development, and gender equality. I also took the opportunity to salute the government of Israel for its important humanitarian efforts following the earthquake in Haiti, including a mobile surgical hospital and its contribution of a police unit to the UN's peacekeeping mission in Haiti.



I was also honored and privileged to meet with women leaders at an event in the Israeli Knesset hosted by Gila Gamliel, Deputy Minister for Advancement of Women, and to visit [Yad Vashem](#), where I laid a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance.

I then traveled to New Delhi, where I met with senior officials in the government of India,

including Foreign Secretary Nirumpama Rao, to discuss how the United States and India can maximize their cooperation at the UN and across a host of international organizations. I was very pleased to lead an interagency delegation to the re-launch of the U.S.-India Joint Working Group on peacekeeping operations, an important result of President Obama's visit

to India in November of last year. This working group is particularly significant in light of India's status as a leading troop contributor to UN peacekeeping operations.

I appreciate the opportunity to share with you on an occasional basis highlights of our activities. At a time of rapidly developing and evolving international challenges, I believe communication about the Administration's multilateral approach is crucial. The United States cannot address the varied and daunting challenges we face today alone or in isolation. Neither can we do all the hard work to strengthen the UN and international organizations to play the most effective, efficient, and accountable role possible. We need committed international partners such as Israel, India, and many others to reach this ambitious goal.

As always, I welcome your comments and feedback.

Best wishes,

Esther Brimmer