



Remarks to New Zealand - U.S. Council

Secretary Condoleezza Rice
Auckland War Memorial Museum
Auckland, New Zealand
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Thank you very much, Winston. Thank you for that kind introduction. And I want to thank you also for your friendship and your collegueship over these last couple of years. Winston has been with me in many different multilateral settings, as well as in our bilateral settings. And I can say, in some of those multilateral settings, it's a good thing to see a friendly face across the table.

I also want to acknowledge former Prime Minister Bolger, for his leadership of this council.

I am really honored to have this opportunity to visit New Zealand. It is my first time as Secretary. Now, of course it will be my last time as Secretary as well. And I want to thank you for realizing that that's not an applause line.

But I have long wanted to come to New Zealand. It is a very special place, and I am tremendously enjoying the opportunity to be here. I appreciate the fact that all of you are here this evening. I know that it is early enough so that you can still get home for that important rugby game that is being played later. And I would have expected, given that in America, if we were getting ready for such an important match, we would all be home putting our game faces on and getting ready, I thought we would have a smaller turnout. So thank you all very much for coming here.

I am a huge sports fan, and I plan myself tonight to watch. I was in Australia, as you know, just yesterday. And Australia is a good friend and a good ally. And I know that they are passionate, too, about their rugby. So I am not going to create a diplomatic incident. I will just say this. The Wallabies have their hands full with the All Blacks. I wish you the best of luck in bringing the Bledisloe Cup back to New Zealand. And I have been fully informed of all the compelling controversies and drama that attend this game. And so I am looking forward to tonight.

New Zealand and the United States, Kiwis and Americans, have a long history of partnership. It is one that is grounded in common interests, but it is elevated by common ideals. And it is always defined by the warmth and the respect of two nations, but more importantly, of two peoples who are bound together by countless ties of friendship and family and shared experience.

We do not always agree on every point of policy. But we share our opinions in good faith, and openly, in the way that friends do. Our partnership is strong and enduring today in this century, as it was when our citizens stood shoulder to shoulder throughout the last century to be on the front lines in defense of freedom, to expand the reach of peace and prosperity, and not just here in the Pacific, but indeed, across the globe.

Now, today, that relationship is being put to good use to look at the challenges of the 21st century, a century that is being defined by different challenges, but by challenges, nonetheless: challenges of the proliferation of dangerous weapons, dangerous weapons that could end up in the hands of those most dangerous of people, terrorists, and that, in fact, are already in the hands of dangerous regimes.

And I, therefore, very much appreciate the fact that New Zealand has been an active partner in promoting security and peaceful aspirations of nations. The support of New Zealand for the Six-Party framework to try and denuclearize the Korean peninsula has been really extraordinary. And I was saying earlier that when the North Koreans exploded a nuclear device in 2006, one of the first calls that I made was to Winston Peters, who immediately was there to support us and to work toward the Security Council resolution that we passed. And then he went to Pyongyang in 2007 to press the case for denuclearization, and continues to do so, as he has just done, at the Asian regional forum. And so, New Zealand's friendship and support in this very important endeavor has been very much appreciated.

I want to thank New Zealand, too, for its leadership in the Pacific Island Forum. The Pacific Island Forum has had important work to do. The Solomon Islands was a place of crisis just a short time ago, but it is a place that is improving. And I look forward to meeting with the leaders of the Pacific Island Forum. There is especially hard work to do concerning Fiji, where the return to democracy is an absolute necessity, where free peoples everywhere are speaking out for the importance of elections in Fiji, and that those elections should not be based on any other conditions but the ability to hold an election -- something that the government of Fiji has promised to do, and has promised to do next year, and should do forthright.

We are also cooperating not just in these big security challenges like proliferation and cooperation on terrorism, but also to open our markets globally. And in that regard, it is very good to be here with the business council. I know that you work hard to increase our bilateral business ties, to increase our bilateral investment, to increase our bilateral trade. And I want to assure you that the United States and President Bush remain open to open markets and to free trade.

It is not always an easy proposition to defend these days. There are plenty of demagogues who would say that all of the economic problems before us are really because we trade freely. In fact, we all know that our economic problems would multiply if we did not trade freely, and that the global trading system needs to be as free and as open as possible.

It requires, also, fairness in trade. And that's why we work together, through the WTO and other organizations, to make sure that countries live up to their obligations. And in this regard, the challenge and the opportunity posed by China, as it becomes a truly significant influence and force in this region, to make certain that, if China is going to be the force that it is in the international economy, that it will do so on a level playing field, that it will take the structural reforms that are needed, that it will defend intellectual property rights, that it will open its markets for financial services and other elements, that it will indeed be a responsible player in a global trading system.

Now, as we work to increase bilateral investment and bilateral trade, you've got a lot going for you. I was just helping out myself a little bit with Australian fashion -- with New Zealand fashion. And I want you to know that you've got good dress makers out there. And so it's a lot of fun to come to a place like New Zealand, and to see the growth of the economy here.

We are cooperating also in the global effort to enhance energy security, to reduce climate change -- which have to go together -- because, as we have been discussing, energy, security, climate change, and economic growth have to go hand in hand, especially through technology and innovation. And that is going to create new industries and new opportunities for economic growth.

And here, too, we have to be guided by the fact that China and India cannot be set aside from any efforts at reduction of climate change and (inaudible) security. Indeed, no matter what we do in climate change, we would absolutely never be able to harness greenhouse gas emissions unless China and India find new technological ways to grow their economies. We know that they are going to insist on economic growth. We have to hope and encourage them not to go through the same energy-intensive, carbon-intensive uses of energy that we ourselves have gone through.

And so, the work that we do together in climate change, the work that we do together in the UN framework convention on climate change must include, as the United States has insisted, China and India. It is a position that I know you share.

Now, we are cooperating in other important ways, too. And here I want to mention one very special way. I had a chance to talk to Winston and to the Prime Minister about the very good work that you are doing on the front lines of freedom in Afghanistan.

And so, let me just close with a few words about that, because we all know that once in a while you need a little help. We all needed help at times in our history to throw off tyranny, to throw off fear. And the Afghan people now need that help. This is a terribly poor country. It's a country, really, with not much going for it in terms of resources. But it's a country that's got spirited people, people who, after 30 years of war and difficulty, are still determined to build a better future.

And, therefore, to have the people of New Zealand completely devoted to that cause through a fine provincial reconstruction team that is operating in Bamian Province is just another sound -- is more sound evidence of how well we work together when we defend at freedom's frontiers.

The First Lady was recently with the Kiwi provincial reconstruction team in Bamian, and she came back filled with praise for what you're doing there. And it is extraordinary, what you are doing there. It has been a model of success. It is one of those models that we are actually trying to extend with best practices, so that others can see it.

In other words, ladies and gentlemen, New Zealand and the United States are cooperating on all of the challenges and more. And in the years ahead, I am confident that our partnership is going to grow stronger and broader. Indeed, as an academic, I am personally pleased that this year we are -- as Winston has said, we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-New Zealand Fulbright Commission.

The number of faculty student exchanges that our countries enjoy are multiplying and expanded dramatically in recent years. It has never been higher than it is now, but as we go to the roots, back at the time of the establishment of that commission, we know that it came along at a time when Fulbrights undoubtedly were taken by people whose generations really built the foundation for U.S.-New Zealand friendship. It means we have to keep expanding those people-to-people ties, so that successful generations can feel the same kinship.

So, whether it is your support for regional and international security, trade, or the environment, whether it is the chance to show off a little bit of the talent of New Zealand through the wonderful choir that just performed for us, or, as I said, for New Zealand's dress makers to show off their talent, or for your wonderful traditions of your indigenous people to show their talents, this is a great place. It is demonstrating that it is a place that believes in tolerance, it's a place that believes in human dignity and human rights. It is demonstrating that it's a nation that, while small in size, is great in vision and even bigger in spirit.

It is a place where peace and democratic values are flourishing. And it is a place that hasn't been content to just have peace and democratic values for itself, but is insistent that those values should be for all human beings, and that New Zealand, like the United States, will not rest until peace, prosperity, and democracy are common across our humanity. Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

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