

RELEASE IN PART  
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**From:** H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 6, 2010 7:49 AM  
**To:** 'JilotyLC@state.gov'  
**Subject:** Fw: Remarks by The First Lady at USAID Agency visit

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----- Original Message -----

**From:** Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>  
**To:** H  
**Cc:** Slaughter, Anne-Marie <SlaughterA@state.gov>; Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wed May 05 21:52:34 2010  
**Subject:** FW: Remarks by The First Lady at USAID Agency visit

**From:** Nora Toiv [mailto:  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 05, 2010 9:47 PM  
**To:** Mills, Cheryl D  
**Subject:** Remarks by The First Lady at USAID Agency visit

B6

The White House

Office of the First Lady

For Immediate Release

May 05, 2010

Remarks by The First Lady at USAID Agency visit

U.S. Agency for International Development Washington, D.C.

2:09 P.M. EDT

MRS. OBAMA: Thank you everyone. Thanks so much. (Applause.) You all take a load off your feet because you work hard enough. (Laughter.) It is truly a pleasure to be here. This is a big agency. This is good. (Laughter.) I think this is one of my largest agency visits. This is really wonderful.

I want to start by thanking Raj for that wonderful introduction, but more so for everything that he's doing here.

And I also want to thank his family who are here, because they're doing many things, working at the Department of Education. They've got two beautiful young children. They're just delicious. (Laughter.) And, you know, we are grateful to all of you for the sacrifice that you're making to work for this administration.

Everyone here is supported by loving families that keep them going. And my greetings here go not just to you but to the families that make it possible for you to do the work that you do.

As you all know, Raj has an extraordinary background. He's brought an unbelievable amount of energy and experience to the job here at USAID. But of course, as you can see, Raj is still only at the beginning of his career. He is young and smart and talented, but he's really just getting started. And that's why we were so happy that he agreed to follow those passions right here to develop the work here at USAID. We are grateful to him, and I want us to give Raj a round of applause for the work that he's doing. (Applause.)

The beauty is, is that he's the right fit for this agency because he is passionate and committed, but he's just a reflection of the passion and commitment that you all bring to this work.

You all recognize the challenges we're facing are bigger and much more complex than ever before: a billion people living in hunger around the world; the growing threat of climate change; the unpredictable threat of natural disaster that we see playing out all the time; an exploding youth population that can either be one of our greatest challenges or one of our greatest opportunities.

But you all share the courage to face those challenges head-on and the determination to help people around the world turn crisis into opportunity.

And I understand this is a pretty tight-knit group, because it really takes a special kind of person to do the work that you do.

So I know that you have to be tight-knit, and I know firsthand because as you know, my mother-in-law — Barack's mother — spent more than 20 years working on a variety of development projects for USAID in Indonesia. And I got to see her commitment firsthand.

I know that many of you, like her, have lived and worked in conditions that the rest of us could only imagine — sometimes risking your own lives and your own safety along the way. Many people don't realize that. You put in incredibly long hours, you work sleepless nights, you've got beautiful kids who want to talk to their daddy -- (laughter) -- and she should be able to talk to her daddy. (Laughter.) Don't know why you won't talk to her. (Laughter.) She doesn't understand why you're standing over there. (Laughter and applause.) It's very clear. (Laughter.)

But you all do so much. You're working weeks and months at a time away from your families. And that in and of itself is a hard thing to even imagine. And you do it all because you believe in the power of development to make America stronger in the world and improve the lives of those less fortunate.

That's why it's been really truly a pleasure that as First Lady I've been able to visit so many agencies throughout the federal government over the last year to thank folks like you for all the hard work and service that you provide.

Over the years, your work here has touched millions of lives.

Because of your efforts to improve basic health conditions, there are children around the world who are alive today who would have died without your help.

Because of your commitment to sustainable agriculture, we've seen the most dramatic increase in food production in history, and we've helped you prevent starvation -- seen you prevent starvation around the world.

And because of the partnerships you've formed with governments, other aid groups, private NGOs, we've seen you help advance democracy and protect human rights from Colombia to Nepal.

But as my husband, the President, and Raj have said -- that the ultimate job, the ultimate objective here is to create the condition that you are no longer needed. That's ultimately what you're working to do. Ultimately your goal is to make it possible for the child in El Salvador to go to school; for the family in the Sudan to live free from fear; and for the woman in Ghana to be able to put food on the table.

That's why you have always represented what is truly best about America -- the idea that we have an obligation not just to help those in need, but to also help folks beyond our borders build capacity to help themselves.

And I know that the mission has been difficult over the last decade. The work that you do has not been easy. You've often been asked to do more and more with less.

And that's why the President and Secretary Clinton, who, by the way, has done a fantastic job representing America around the world, that's why together they have made development an important part of foreign policy once again.

USAID will play a central role in our mission going forward. The President and Secretary Clinton are committed to making development an essential part of our efforts to ensure peace, security and progress in the world.

Doing this is about more than simply building good relationships between presidents and prime ministers. You all know that. It's going to take, as my husband said, a new era of mutual interest, respect and responsibility between real people around the world. Every person that you empower through your work and every life that you improve through your work gets us one step closer to making that vision a reality.

And right now we have more resources and we have a greater ability to help than ever before. We have the ability to coordinate our work not only with other governments, but also with those in the private sector and with NGOs. And together, we're going to continue to make progress on the issues that you work on each and every single day.

Right now, progress is being made in places like Afghanistan, where your colleagues are working with Afghan people in an incredibly dangerous environment to lay the foundation for a more stable future there.

You're making sure resources are being used wisely -- increasing access to health care, rejuvenating the economy and making sure that more children have access to a good education.

But perhaps nowhere has your work been more visible to the American people over the last year than in Haiti.

In the aftermath of the terrible earthquake that killed hundreds of thousands of people and left millions without food, water and shelter, the men and women of USAID, you all answered the call, and you put service above self, and helped to mount a rapid response to one of the most complex disasters that we've seen.

Your DART teams were some of the first on the ground, helping to save lives and assess the damage.

Your work with the Haitian government, our military, the U.N. and NGOs helped feed nearly 3 million Haitians, and provide water and sanitation services to much of the affected population.

And through a variety of resources and sources, you've helped treat thousands of victims who urgently needed medical care.

And as you know, three weeks ago, Jill Biden and I visited Port-Au-Prince to see your work firsthand, and to meet the women and men who are working so hard to get that country back on its feet. And it was truly an inspiring visit.

I had the privilege of meeting with many of your colleagues, including the USAID country head, Dr. Carlene Dei while I was there, and she was terrific.

And wherever I went, I was amazed and incredibly touched to hear the stories of your sacrifice and your compassion and your amazing partnership with the Haitian people and folks around the world in the aftermath of that disaster. It was clear from my visit that people valued the work and saw this country in a different way because of the work that you were doing.

We had a chance to visit families that were living in the tent cities in Champs De Mars -- families, as you know, who've lost everything, and for whom every day is a struggle just to stay dry and to feed their kids.

We visited a school, which was really just a set of buses that were donated by the First Lady of the Dominican Republic. But these buses allowed thousands of boys and girls in Haiti to continue to focus on their studies and to have a place to go to just settle down from the crisis. Teachers there were using the art, music and dance to provide emotional support for students who were suffering from the trauma.

And we also visited another school that's being rebuilt so that more children can realize their dreams of an education even in the midst of the devastation.

And part of our mission in visiting Haiti was to shine a light not just on the work that you did, but on the work that still needs to be done.

The destruction, as you know, there is catastrophic, and the needs of the Haitian people are still overwhelming, as you know.

But every day, USAID and others are working to help Haiti recover and to rebuild, little by little, over the next months and over the years to come.

And I know that your work in places like Haiti and Afghanistan represents only a small fraction of the work that you do here at USAID.

And I know that many of you here and around the world are making a difference in ways that will never show up on the TV. It'll never land on the front page of the newspaper. Much of the work that you do is quiet. Many people don't know it's happening.

But I do think that events of the last few months have given the American people just a glimpse of the kind of people who work here -- the sacrifices you make; the exhaustion; the tragedy and the risk that you endure -- all because you believe that it's your duty to help people in their greatest time of need.

And that's why the men and women of USAID are so special -- a very different breed of folk. That's why development will once again be a central part of our foreign policy in America, and that's a very good thing because of the work that you do. And that's why we're counting on you to help us strengthen and transform this agency, to continue to work with Raj, to support him in everything he does, because we support him.

There are no words that can express the amount of gratitude that my husband and I feel for the work that you do. You are making us proud. You're making the country proud. And you're making the world see America in a very fundamentally different way.

So it is my great honor to be here. I hope to be back. I hope to be able to see many more of you on my trips internationally to support the work that you're doing, to help shine a light on the efforts that you're making, the progress that's being made.

And, again, I'm just grateful to all of you. And I'm going to take some time now just to shake some hands. You all can stand back up again, I'm sure. (Laughter.) And Raj can see his child. (Laughter.)

So thank you all. Thank you so much. (Applause.)

END

2:22 P.M. EDT