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# Advancing America's Enduring Interests

By

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**Secretary of State**

[The following statement by Secretary Christopher was made before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in Washington, DC, on June 30, 1994.]

I wanted to come here today to review with you the Clinton Administration's progress in advancing America's vital interests in the world.

As you know, the President is about to embark on a trip that will take him across Europe. I will join him in Riga, where we will pay tribute to the victory of the Baltic peoples over tyranny and the reintegration of their nations with the West. We will go on to Poland, where we will commemorate the approaching 50th anniversary of the Warsaw uprising and discuss with President Walesa our comprehensive approach to economic and security cooperation in Europe.

From there, we go to the G-7 summit in Naples, where we will build on the progress we made last year in encouraging global growth, open trade, and Russian reform. In Germany, we will discuss with Chancellor Kohl our shared goal of promoting security and economic recovery in the East. And we will pursue that goal at the U.S.-EU summit in Berlin. Later this month, I will go on to the Middle East and Asia.

I thought it important to take this opportunity to discuss our objectives for these trips and to offer a broader view of the overall objectives of our foreign policy.

I know that we will spend much of our time today discussing immediate crises. But in my statement, I will focus on what I believe to be the most important contribution I can make as Secretary of State: that is to help the President build and maintain long-term relationships and lasting structures that will advance America's enduring interests.

We must take advantage of a unique historical moment when none of the great powers views any other as an immediate military threat. It requires managing effectively our relations with Russia, Western Europe, Japan, and China. And it requires strengthening, extending, and creating the institutions that serve our overarching strategic objectives. These objectives remain: ensuring our security, reinforcing our prosperity, and expanding the reach of democracy and free markets.

Since taking office, the Clinton Administration has made steady and remarkable progress in advancing these objectives:

- Eighteen months ago, our budget deficits were out of control and our international economic leadership was in question. With your help, we have put our economic house in order. And through NAFTA, GATT, and APEC, we are building the foundations of a more open world trading system.

- Eighteen months ago, the Middle East peace talks were stalled. Today, we are helping to implement a historic agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

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Through our trilateral talks, we are promoting major new progress between Israel and Jordan. With our efforts on the Israeli-Syrian and other negotiating tracks, we are closer than many ever thought possible to building a lasting structure of peace in the Middle East.

- Eighteen months ago, the United States was still groping for a comprehensive security strategy toward Europe.

Today, we are putting a new strategy into place. We are transforming NATO to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War world. Through the Partnership for Peace and other initiatives, we are helping new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe become our stable partners in diplomacy and trade. We have forged a cooperative relationship with Russia and helped keep that nation moving toward reform.

The end of the Cold War has given us a unique opportunity to build a more integrated world. But the gains of market democracy—in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and around the world—will endure only if we have the foresight to extend to new nations the institutions that have long served us well. If we are to lock into place the gains of the Cold War's demise, we must now build the economic and security architecture for the future. American leadership is the essential condition for constructing that architecture.

In my previous visits with this committee, I set out our strategic priorities. Today, I will focus on a few of the most pressing issues we face in advancing these priorities.

This Administration is committed to building a secure, democratic, and fully integrated Europe. After the Second World War, visionary leaders on both sides of the Atlantic built the institutions that ensured the security and economic strength of the United States and Western Europe: NATO and GATT, the OECD and its predecessor, and ultimately the European Union. These institutions helped produce unparalleled peace and prosperity for half a century—but only for half a continent. For Eastern Europe, the benefits of Western integration and of post-war reconstruction were denied by the harsh confrontation of the Cold War.

Earlier this month, I called on our partners at the OECD and NATO to help extend to all of Europe the benefits, and obligations, of the same liberal trading and collective security order that have been pillars of strength for the West. We are actively working with our EU partners to expand market access and investment opportunities for Central and Eastern Europe. Last week, we welcomed Russia to the Partnership for Peace, the most important strategic initiative NATO has undertaken since its creation. By widening NATO's reach, we are asserting that Europe cannot be split into zones of stability and insecurity.

After centuries of great power conflict in Europe, we are building the first security partnership that can encompass all the nations of the continent. Twenty-one countries have joined the Partnership for Peace. In September, Poland will host the first joint exercise on the soil of a former Warsaw Pact state.

As the President said in Prague, the question now is not whether, but when and how, NATO will admit new members. We are committed to NATO expansion. And that process begins with developing deep cooperative relationships through the Partnership for Peace.

The war in Bosnia, Mr. Chairman, remains a threat to European security and integration. We have a strategic interest in seeing that the war does not spread. And certainly, we have a humanitarian interest in ending the violence and in easing the plight of its victims.

In February, when I last came before this committee, two wars were being fought on Bosnian territory. In March, we brokered an agreement between Bosnia's Muslims and Croats to end one

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of those wars. We helped end the shelling of Sarajevo, and the exclusion zones NATO has enforced around that city and around Gorazde have largely held. But violence continues, making it vital that the parties agree to a political settlement.

We have been working with Russia and our other European partners in the Contact Group on a proposal that can form the basis for a negotiated settlement. We are now discussing the final contours of that proposal and the consequences should any of the parties reject it. In our view, this must include a credible threat to increase pressure on the Serbs if they say no.

This is a moment of opportunity on Bosnia. Although we may well reach the point where the international community lifts the arms embargo, it would be a tragic mistake to undermine the settlement process by unilaterally lifting the embargo now. That would break the cohesion of the NATO Alliance. It could lead to the general collapse of UN sanctions as an effective instrument in international affairs. And it could undermine our efforts in situations such as Iraq and Libya.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to Russia, this Administration believes that supporting that nation's reforms and its integration with the West is the best investment we can make in our security. That investment continues to yield solid returns for America. It has made our nation and the world safer. It has allowed us to dedicate more resources to domestic renewal.

- In January, the United States, Russia, and Ukraine signed a historic accord to eliminate nuclear weapons from Ukraine's soil.
- In the last three weeks, in addition to joining the Partnership for Peace, Russia signed an economic partnership with the European Union and a cooperation agreement with the OECD.
- Last week, we agreed to help Russia develop oil and gas reserves in its far east. And Russia agreed to close its plutonium production reactors.
- At the Naples summit, President Yeltsin will join us for the first time in the G-7 Plus One format. In September, Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin will hold their third summit.

Integration into Western institutions will bring benefits to Russia, including expanded trade, greater investment, and military cooperation with NATO. It also will require Russia to accept the obligations Western nations share: to pursue sound economic policies, uphold democracy, and respect the rights of other countries. Integration will serve the interests of the United States and of all the nations of Europe, particularly those that so recently won their freedom from communist rule.

The successful transformation of the Soviet empire into a community of sovereign, democratic states is a matter of fundamental importance to America and Europe. In particular, a prosperous, non-nuclear Ukraine is vital to European stability. We are helping Ukraine try to reverse the deterioration of its economy, which poses the most immediate threat to its future. This Administration also has worked hard to achieve the full and timely withdrawal of Russian troops from the Baltic states.

Let me be clear: a rhetorical commitment to the independence of new democracies will not suffice. It will require a determined effort, backed by resources. It will require the steady support of this Congress.

Another distinctive imprint of the Administration's foreign policy is the high priority we assign to economic security. In this respect, I have not hesitated to challenge foreign policy orthodoxy. It used to be said that balance-of-power diplomacy and arms control were "high politics" and economics was "low politics." I reject that distinction and not because times have

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changed. When our predecessors created the Bretton Woods system 50 years ago this summer, when they launched the Marshall Plan and established the GATT, they knew that political and economic diplomacy are indivisible.

With support from this Congress, President Clinton is advancing the most ambitious international economic agenda of any President since Harry Truman.

With the Uruguay Round, we broke global gridlock to complete the most comprehensive trade agreement in history. The Uruguay Round is an investment in a more stable and integrated world in which open societies are linked and invigorated by open markets. Its approval by Congress this year, so that it can take effect next January, is a top priority for this Administration.

When Congress approved NAFTA, we built a platform for greater American prosperity and a bridge to greater trade and investment throughout the Americas. We recognized our overriding national interest in Mexico's stability, prosperity, and democratic development. Last year, I was gratified to make the foreign policy case for passing NAFTA. As we seek fast track authority, I look forward to making a similar case for liberalizing trade and investment with other fast growing markets, beginning with Chile.

When the President hosted the successful meeting of APEC leaders in Seattle, we deepened our economic integration with the dynamic Asia Pacific region. Already, more than 40% of American trade is with Asia, supporting 2.5 million U.S. jobs.

Our commitment to promoting a secure, prosperous, and democratic Asia requires that America remain a stabilizing power in the Asia-Pacific. Instability and conflict in Asia would undermine global economic growth, threaten democracies, and encourage proliferation.

This Administration has consistently identified North Korea's nuclear program as a threat to America's vital security interests. North Korea's actions threaten peace on the Korean Peninsula and endanger our treaty ally, South Korea. They threaten the strategic stability of the entire region and could spur a nuclear arms race in Asia. And they threaten our global efforts to prevent proliferation. Left unchecked, rogue regimes or terrorist groups would one day be a cargo ship away from acquiring a nuclear capability.

We always have preferred to address this problem, and to protect these interests, through negotiations. We now have a new opportunity to conduct on favorable terms a third round of discussions between the United States and North Korea. But should North Korea use dialogue for the purpose of delay, we are prepared to move the issue back to the Security Council, pursue sanctions, and take whatever steps are appropriate to resolve the issue.

We look forward to broad and thorough discussions with the North on a full range of security, political, and economic issues. And we welcome the upcoming meeting between the Presidents of North and South Korea. Our objectives are the same: a nuclear free Korean Peninsula, a secure Asia, and a strong non-proliferation regime. Our resolve to achieve these objectives is undiminished.

Mr. Chairman, that same resolve underlies our policy toward Haiti. Our interests are clear: maintaining the stability of our hemisphere, protecting the historic tide of democracy in our region, and a humane resolution of the refugee problem.

Our objective is clear: the restoration of democracy and the return of President Aristide. We have built a strong coalition at the UN and at the OAS that reflects the international community's determination to achieve this goal.

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The recent increase in the refugee flow from Haiti is a result of the repressive policies of the illegitimate military regime. The longer the tragic situation continues, the harder it will be for those who have propped up the dictatorship. In particular, the more protracted the crisis, the more tenuous is the future of the military in Haiti. When General Cedras and the other leaders responsible go, as they must, we can begin the process of reconciliation and the restoration of hope to Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, we have accomplished a great deal in the last 18 months. But I am concentrating on our agenda for the future. We will be addressing a number of important challenges, including:

- Ratification of the Uruguay Round and initiatives to open new markets in Latin America and Asia;
- An expanded NATO that advances the integration and security of a wider Europe;
- A comprehensive peace in the Middle East, with Israel secure and fully integrated in the region's political and economic life;
- A strong non-proliferation regime, including indefinite extension of the NPT, a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and a ratified Chemical Weapons Convention;
- A United Nations better able to respond effectively and rapidly to crises;
- An Africa in which an increasing number of democracies cooperate to resolve conflicts and achieve sustainable development; and
- International action on population and global climate change.

Since taking office, Mr. Chairman, I have often spoken about my deep respect for two of my most distinguished predecessors, George Marshall and Dean Acheson. We still admire the way they managed the crises they faced. But most of all, we remember them for the enduring institutions they left behind. Their portraits hang today in my office as a reminder of what determined American leadership can accomplish.

Much has changed in the world since Truman, Marshall, and Acheson forged America's post-war foreign policy. But I continue to be struck by the similarities. They met the challenge of reconstruction in post-war Western Europe. We are meeting the challenge of reconstruction in post-Cold War Eastern Europe. They were present at the outset of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We are helping achieve its resolution. They faced a crisis in Korea. We are working to avert one.

We are the world's largest military and economic power. Our nation and its founding principles still occupy a special place in the imagination of people all over the world. And we still have the institutions the post-war generation left us. With the Cold War past, we now have the power to expand the reach of these institutions and to extend the security, prosperity, and democracy that they helped preserve for us.