

**United States Narrative Statement**  
**Submitted for the Sanitation and Water for All High Level Meeting**  
**Washington DC, April 23, 2010**

*Excerpts from the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's speech on World Water Day, March 22, 2010.*  
*For the complete speech go to [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov).*

“In the United States, water represents one of the great diplomatic and development opportunities of our time. It’s not every day you find an issue where effective diplomacy and development will allow you to save millions of lives, feed the hungry, empower women, advance our national security interests, protect the environment, and demonstrate to billions of people that the United States cares, cares about you and your welfare. Water is that issue. “

“Now, we know that this challenge is much too large for the United States – or any one nation – to address alone. Even if all of the world’s development aid were directed toward water and sanitation efforts, the resources still wouldn’t be enough to meet the needs of developing countries. So we need to work together to leverage the efforts of other nations, the international community, and partners in the nonprofit and private sectors. Today, I want to discuss five streams of action that make up our approach to water issues.”

- “First, we need to build capacity at the local, national, and regional levels. Countries and communities must take the lead in securing their own water futures. And, particularly in areas where we have serious, committed partners, we should work to expand their ability to address water challenges. We are looking at ways to work with international partners to support the development and implementation of country-led water and sanitation plans. The Millennium Challenge Corporation is supporting countries that are committed to making needed reforms, improving governance, and taking on the tough development challenges that surround the issue of water. USAID is working at a grassroots level and with national ministries to improve governance and capacity-building. ”
- “Second, we need to elevate our diplomatic efforts and we need to better coordinate them. More than 24 UN agencies and other intergovernmental bodies are engaged on water issues. And multilateral development banks, including the World Bank, and other international financial institutions have acquired deep experience working on water challenges. But the work of these bodies has often suffered from a lack of coordination and high-level attention. The joint G8-Africa Leader’s Statement on Water at the last G8 Summit in L’Aquila sent a message that water issues are a priority for the international community. And we are committed to following through on that by elevating water issues within intergovernmental organizations, the international financial institutions, and other regional and global bodies.”

- “The third element of our water strategy is mobilizing financial support. Managing water issues requires resources. And in some cases, the United States will be able to provide assistance. We’ve seen how relatively small grants can have a vast impact on water security... Other U.S. grants are targeted to support hygiene and sanitation projects or water quality improvements that involve small-scale hardware such as household water purification technology. And we are making critical investments in programs that promote behavior that contributes to good sanitation and hygiene.”

“In some instances, we are also providing assistance for larger infrastructure projects as well... MCC-supported water programs are improving irrigation systems, rebuilding critical infrastructure, and increasing access to clean water and sanitation. Overall, the MCC has invested \$1.3 billion so far in country-led water programs. Now, we won’t be able to provide that type of support everywhere. But we hope that these projects will send a message to governments in developing countries that if they adopt sound policies and serious reforms, the United States will help them deliver sustainable water solutions that benefit their people. And a government’s success in providing water and sanitation services is a leading indicator of its determination to deliver other vital services. “

- “Fourth, we must harness the power of science and technology. There is no technological silver bullet for dealing with water scarcity, although we have had success with simple solutions such as ceramic filters and chlorine disinfectant. But there are a number of areas where science and technological innovation can make a huge impact, and U.S. Government agencies are on the cutting edge of many global efforts to assess and address water challenges. Researchers working in U.S. agencies have discovered better techniques for disinfecting and storing drinking water, for predicting floods and droughts, and for improving the productivity of water for food and economic growth. We have also seen progress on new technologies for waste water treatment, desalinization, and the use of global information systems. We need to work harder to share this knowledge with the rest of the world.”
- “Just as we are reaching out across the U.S. Government to help deal with these challenges, we also need to leverage the full-range of our relationships beyond government. That’s why the final aspect of our water efforts is broadening the scope of our partnerships. By focusing on our strengths and leveraging our efforts against the work of others, we can deliver results that are greater than the sum of the parts.”

“As we face this challenge, one thing that will endure is the United States’ commitment to water issues. We are in this for the long haul. I am convinced that if we empower communities and countries to meet their own challenges, expand our diplomatic efforts, make sound investments, foster innovation, and build effective partnerships, we can make real progress together and seize this historic opportunity.”

- U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, March 22, 2010