The State Department's New Bureau of Energy Resources: Shaping America's Global Energy Policy

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"With a growing global population and a finite supply of fossil fuels, the need to diversify our energy supply is urgent. We need to engage traditional exporters and emerging economies alike, to bolster international energy security, and ensure that countries' natural wealth results in inclusive growth."

– Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

Why a Bureau of Energy Resources?

The world runs on energy and people need affordable, reliable and sustainable energy supplies. Energy provides for our most basic needs and fuels the technologies that can secure our futures. But over one billion of the world's people still do not have access to electricity. If we ignore their needs, we entrench their poverty. If we expand their access to energy without making it sustainable, we accelerate environmental impacts and the competition for scarce resources.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton announced her intention to establish a Bureau of Energy Resources on October 14, 2011, as part of the State Department's first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review. The Department is charged with shaping U.S. international energy engagement, influencing how nations move to a cleaner energy future, and protecting our energy infrastructure and transit routes.

This effort will require strong diplomatic relationships with major consumers and suppliers. We also need to anticipate changes in energy markets, and work with international organizations to stabilize markets and build capacity to manage them. Investments in secure, expanding, and ever-cleaner sources of energy will translate into improved health, greater economic sustainability, safer living environments, and enhanced U.S. national security.

The Bureau's Core Goals

- Manage the geopolitics of today's energy economy through vigorous diplomacy with producers and consumers. *This is critical to promote adequate and affordable supplies of energy and to keep energy markets stable.*
- Stimulate market forces for transformational policies in alternative energy, electricity, development and reconstruction. *This creates market demand for green technologies and products where the U.S. has a competitive advantage.*
- Increase access to energy in developing countries, expand good governance, and deepen transparency. *This helps developing economies find commercially and environmentally sustainable paths out of poverty.*

New Solutions for Old Resources

A balanced approach requires a mix of old and new energy sources. Traditional sources like oil and gas continue to be essential but all countries must promote responsible use and diversification of those supplies. Meanwhile the search for long-term substitutes must continue. The new Bureau of Energy Resources will work closely with key actors in the energy sector – oil and gas producers, developers of renewable technologies, and NGOs – to spur innovation and unleash private capital in environmentally and commercially sustainable ways.

Energy in U.S. Foreign Policy

The creation of the new Bureau emphasizes the important role of energy in U.S. foreign policy. The United States has a long-standing interest in a secure supply of energy resources, as well as in sustaining and diversifying those resources.

The new Bureau will work across U.S. Government agencies to engage traditional exporters and emerging economies in a coordinated effort to:

- Boost international energy security.
- Steer the world's energy mix toward a more sustainable path.
- Emphasize America's continuing commitment to transparency and good governance, so that each nation's natural wealth translates into increased prosperity for all its citizens.