



Secretaries of State and Health and Human Services Address Forum Participants

Following are some excerpts from significant presentations made by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala.

Secretary Albright's Remarks

Monday's opening plenary session featured speeches from political leaders around the globe. Heading the lineup was Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who spoke two years ago at the disability tent in Beijing at the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women. Albright said she was delighted to be addressing disabled women gathered here in Bethesda.

"For me, speaking at the disabilities tent was the high point of the whole Beijing experience. It was what the women's conference was all about -- commitment, empowerment, access, unity -- not to mention rain.

"Today, we meet in better weather, but in the same spirit and with the same fundamental message.

"All women, whether we have disabilities or whether we do not, are ready to claim our rightful place as full citizens and full participants in every society on earth."

Albright also spoke about specific steps that the United States should take to encourage full inclusion of people with disabilities around the world.

"...A year ago, when the National Council on Disability issued a report asking whether our foreign policy had a coherent approach to disability, the answer was no. This not an acceptable answer and, fortunately, it is not an answer that will remain accurate very long.

"Within a matter of weeks, USAID will be issuing a new policy and action plan on disability and development. That document will express the agency's commitment to reach out and include persons with disabilities in its programs and place this issue prominently on our development agenda with governments that receive our aid."

The Secretary also took this opportunity to announce that there will shortly be a plan to make U.S. Embassies accessible to people with disabilities and to ensure that buildings constructed overseas by the U.S. government will in the future be accessible.

Albright also outlined six points of action, aimed at furthering the agenda of full inclusion for people with disabilities, including reduction of violence against women, elimination of land mines and U.S. ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Secretary Shalala's Remarks

Following Albright's speech, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala took the podium

where she asserted that, "Issues affecting women with disabilities are not just disability issues. They're not just women's issues. They are challenges for every single person on this planet -- every single person. And none of us can give up until we meet them."

Shalala drew laughter from the audience when she mentioned the newest Barbie doll from Mattel, "Share a Smile Becky," who rides a hot pink wheelchair.

"The problem was that this new doll with a wheelchair couldn't fit into the elevator of the \$100 dollar Barbie Dream House," said Shalala, "In other words, while Becky could visit some other places -- namely the much cheaper, one-room, doorless Traveling Surprise House -- she had no access to the gem of the Barbie world, the Dream House.

"As the local high school student who noticed this defect put it, 'This is what we live with every day.'"

Then Shalala drove her point home. "...If every woman with disabilities is going to have access to good health and good health care, we need more than a little change here and there. We need a fundamental change in attitude, in policy and in policy makers. A change of the mind and heart."

Maria Rantho, South African Parliamentarian Says Disability and Apartheid Movements Go Hand in Hand

One of the powerful keynote presentations given Monday morning was by Maria Rantho, Member of Parliament, South Africa. Some quotes follow and a full copy is available in the Resource Room, Chairman's Board Room, Meeting Room Level.

Maria Rantho, a member of South Africa's Parliament spoke about how, in South Africa, the disability rights movement emerged hand in hand with the struggle against apartheid -- in particular, the Soweto uprisings of 1976.

"A large number of youth that participated in the struggle following the uprisings were disabled. These activists suddenly found themselves on the sidelines, unable to lead, yet too angry to sit at home in self-pity. Just imagine the position of a disabled person in this same community -- equally poor and underdeveloped, and even less able to live an ordinary life. And thus the disability rights movement in South Africa emerged out of the oppression and killings of the late seventies and early eighties...Sixty percent of the first Executive Committee of Disabled People in South Africa, founded in 1984, were disabled people shot by the police."

Rantho said that as the hearts and minds of people in South Africa began to change, and the white minority lost its control over the country, people with disabilities played an integral role in the struggle for self-rule.

"South Africans with disabilities astounded the nation on April 26-28, 1994 when they braved the bombs and threats that preceded South Africa's first ever democratic elections...Images of disabled people queuing at the kilometres-long polls, arriving in wheelbarrows, being led by family members, and some crawling for kilometres to cast their first vote filled our television screens during those historic three days."

The result of this participation, said Rantho, was the decision by the newly elected ANC government to include disabled people as a target group for development in post-apartheid South Africa.

The Plenary session was appropriately capped with a speech and videotape presentation by Laura Liswood, founder of the Women's Leadership Project. Liswood interviewed 15 current and former women Presidents and Prime ministers and gained significant insights on how women as leaders are unique. Her observation that "Change moves from the unthinkable, to the impossible to the inevitable" was abundantly reflected not only by the speakers who preceded her, but also by the achievement of the hundreds of disabled women gathered at the Leadership Forum.

Secretary of Education Richard Riley to Keynote Tuesday Morning

Don't miss this morning's presentation by Secretary of Education Richard Riley, Cabinet Member. Following are some biographical notes.

Education Secretary Richard Riley is the keynote speaker of today's plenary session. Riley has devoted a significant amount of time over the past two years to the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which was reauthorized by Congress earlier this month. This keystone legislation provides for free and appropriate educational services to all children and youth with disabilities.

Riley's work as Secretary of Education has been filled with activity. In the first 21 months of the Clinton Administration, Riley's work in building bi-partisan coalitions helped secure six ground-breaking education initiatives spanning kindergarten through college. Riley is noted for his persistence, but also his self effacing manner. In the words of one newspaper editorial, he is "...The Cabinet member who is perhaps the quietest...but among the most effective."

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Tuesday afternoon Workshop Room Change and Translation Schedule:**

A. Mentoring (all languages)	Lalique
B. Development Assistance (all languages)	Cabinet/Judiciary
C. Research & Disability Studies (no interpretation)	Baccarat
D. Educating Women & Girls with Disabilities (all languages)	Haverford
E. Access to Higher Education (only Spanish)	Waterford
F. Literacy (all languages)	Diplomat/Ambassador
- **Caucus Meeting on Barriers to Employment** created by the U.S. Social Security System--including problems in the Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS) Program, June 17, Tuesday, 6 p.m., Room 309, Hyatt. Contact: Laura Hershey at the Doubletree Hotel.
- **LUNCH** on Tuesday will be served on both the Ballroom and Lobby Levels to reduce the traffic jams.
- The Forum was announced in the *Washington Post* on Monday and was the "hot pick of the day" on *USA Today's* web page, thanks to Forum sponsor **Margaret Staton**.
- **VOLUNTEERS** are needed to help serve lunch, to help guide people who are blind and to help with the microphones during Plenary Sessions.



Internet Classes Schedule



Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00 - 10:30	Sarah Steel Markoulova Phan Thi Bich Diep Susan Chitimbe Jacqui Christy Georgia Rogers Florence Adong Elizabeth Men Dorothy Musakanya Kim MiYeon	AM Ariani Anneli Joneken Chili Perez Ratna Ibrahim Sri Kastilah Anna Katrina Rooi Mohua Paul Lousie Gunn Zohra Rajah Yook Seok Win Young Chung	Anita Beu Gail Bingham Tove Hygom Elizabeth Burrows Laureen Summers Philippa Swain Miliete Yamane Andamichpae Catherine Bontke Mary O'Hagan Sabine Luedtke	
11:00- 12:30	Monica Bartley Charlotte Spinkston Nguyen Hong Ha Lisa Lester Benoita Gold Sarah Werner Naomy Ruth Esiaba Lisa Blumberg Juliet Meyers Maria Hall Lynita Conradie	(Session in FRENCH) MarieJosette Minko Suaoui Aming Diariata Coulibaly Mapangou Maite Drikine Hatouma Gakou Felza Raza Finjato Ubanatu Fatimetou Sy Ndaya Gueye	Beatrice Ngcobo Abeba Tucci Ghenet Anaya Juliet Mupurua Catherine Tsagli Herthan Djatmiko Ozilla Keys Fulb	
13:30- 15:00	Ann Forts Ruythis Rybureld Susie Grimes Yoon Mi Kyong Jeannette Harvey Joan Kerr Mehri Brown Cynthia Waddell Kathleen Coleman	Bae Bog Joo Osinline Ngulube Arni Surwanti Gordana Rajkov Heather Brunner Kicki Nordstrom Irene Woodell Nadine Mushaka Scherrone Dunhamn Louny Bellenehaus Yolan Koster Dreese	Korina Chupina Devva Kasnitz Hendrietta Bogopane Irena Ainu Ntombi Fakudzi Marcelle Meisel Linda Dallos Betsy Bayha	
15:30- 17:00	Catherine Boldt Rebecca Ramage Tuttle Ronah Moyo Grenada Tashkent Brenda Samuels Corbett O'Toole Euphrasia Mbewe	(Session in SPANISH) Damaris Solano Luciana Valle Valdes Mabel Ballestovos Cadenas Salazar Maria Elena Perez Nagally Martinez Lesbia Solarzano Alejandra Poveda Olga Manuela Zelaya	(Session in SPANISH) Antonia Ferreira Isabel Melo dos Santos Marta Heredia Hindia Matos Dalia Figueiredo Karla Rivas Graciela Miranda Alicia Contreras	