



**UN Briefing  
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**Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo  
US Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations**

***Addressing World Crises at the UN: The Role of the US***

**Peggy Blumenthal:** Good afternoon everybody. Welcome to the Institute of International Education. We're once again thrilled to be hosting a meeting of the Women's Foreign Policy Group, which always brings not only fabulous speakers, but wonderful participants in the roundtable as well. We're getting a bit of a late start, so I won't go on at too much length, but for those of you who don't know the Institute, we administer for the US State Department the Fulbright program. We run many other programs, but all of the countries represented here I know have worked with us closely on the Fulbright program. You may not know that, with support from the UN Foundation program, we have a wonderful program that allows Fulbrighters to work at the UN in internships, and also at UNESCO in Paris. It gives international Fulbrighters a chance to really understand the workings of the UN, and it gives American participants as well a chance to go back and maybe end up working at the UN, or maybe just be a supporter of the UN in whatever their career is later. So we're delighted particularly to have Ambassador DiCarlo here, but I'll let Pat do the full introduction.

**Patricia Ellis:** Okay well thank you Peggy for having us back again. We love coming over here. We've had a great partnership, many terrific events, and it's cozy around this table, and since we like to have very interactive programs, this is just perfect. There'll be plenty of time after the Ambassador speaks for Q&A. So, good afternoon everyone, and welcome. So glad to see a big crowd, and we have an interesting crowd today. I'm Patricia Ellis, president of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. For those who don't know us, we promote women's leadership and women's voices on pressing issues of the day. And there are a few at the UN and in the world right now, so we are lucky to have Ambassador DiCarlo here with us today. She has an amazingly busy schedule. We're talking about world crises, so we'll be dealing with many things, including Libya, Syria and many other issues. We have a number of diplomats here today, and I'm going to ask them all to stand, and just tell us which country they're from, because I just like to recognize [them].

**Ambassador Greta Gunnarsdottir:** I'm Greta Gunnarsdottir, Ambassador of Iceland.

**Ambassador Byrganym Aitimova:** I'm Ambassador of Kazakhstan, my name is Byrganym Aitimova.

**Consul General Koula Sophianou:** Good afternoon. I'm Koula Sophianou, Republic of Cyprus.

**Consul General Arta Rama:** Hello my name is Arta Rama, I'm Consul General of Kosovo.

**Johanna Karanko:** I'm Johanna Karanko, from the Mission of Finland.

**Ambassador Sanja Zografaska-Krsteska:** I'm Sanja Zografaska-Krsteska, Ambassador of [the Former Yugoslav Republic of] Macedonia to the United Nations.

**Ambassador Maria del Lujan Flores:** I'm Maria del Lujan Flores, Ambassador of Uruguay to the Organization of American States.

**Patricia Ellis:** Did I miss anyone? Okay well this is fantastic to have you all here. A number of them were with us recently at our Celebration of Women Diplomats, and also at our wonderful event at the end of April with Michelle Bachelet, which was really, really incredible.

So it's a real privilege and pleasure to introduce Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo. I have known her for many years—she used to be a member of the Women's Foreign Policy Group, attended many events when she was in Washington. She has such an impressive career that I am only going to give you a few highlights. Ambassador DiCarlo is a career member of the senior Foreign Service and she was sworn in as the US Deputy Permanent Representative last July. Before that she was the Alternate Representative for Special Political Affairs to the United Nations, [and] she was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs [at the State Department]. She was the Director for United Nations Affairs at the National Security Council and she was the Deputy in Washington to the US Permanent Representative. She served in Moscow and Oslo. She's received the highest awards from the State Department. I'm just going to read these: Sustained Superior Achievement, Sustained Honor and Meritorious Honor. Lastly, before she joined the Foreign Service, she was a member of the Secretariat of UNESCO. And she is an alumna of Brown University, where she got a BA, MA, and PhD.

So I just wanted to mention that today's remarks are on the record, when we get to the Q&A that's going to be off the record so we can have free-flowing discussion. So please join me in welcoming Ambassador DiCarlo. [*Applause.*]

**Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo:** Thank you. Thank you very much Pat, and thank you Peggy for hosting us today. It's really great to be with you this afternoon. I have to say I am a big fan of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. I was a member, and attended regularly when I was in Washington. For some reason I seem to have had more time in those days than I do in New York. I also have worked with IIE over the years on the Fulbright program, during my foreign assignment. So I'm very pleased to be here.

I've been asked to speak to you about the role of the US at the United Nations, [and] how we approach world crises. And I'd like to give you a sense of what we've achieved, and what lies ahead. Now, two years ago, in May of 2009, I had the pleasure of briefing the Women's Foreign Policy Group. I remember you had your board here, at a session at the UN. At that time, I outlined the priorities President Obama had set for our work here in New York. I am happy to say that since that time we have achieved some very tangible results on the important issues. But we know that many more real challenges lie ahead.

I think a lot has changed since May 2009, when I addressed your group. At that time, President Obama was preparing to deliver a major speech in Cairo on US relations with the Muslim world. And we were bracing at that time for a new threat, an influenza that was best known to be endemic in swine. And in June of that year, we learned of a young Iranian woman named Neda, who was killed in the streets of Tehran, who galvanized demonstrators and shocked the world. Now, events have continued to unfold in the last two years. In September 2009, President Obama addressed the UN General Assembly for the first time. He expressed the conviction that, more than ever—in a world that was gripped by economic turmoil, sweeping political changes, unrest—that the “interests of nations and peoples are shared.”

And we continue to believe, today, that the security and wellbeing of Americans are linked to those of people everywhere. We need to find common responses to problems, problems that really pay no heed to borders—that cross borders, as my boss would like to say, Ambassador Rice, faster than the speed of sound. And that's why the majority of Americans continue to support the important work of the United Nations.

Now, I see a number of colleagues here from other missions—you stood up, and I know some of you well. And I don't think you will disagree with the statement that I am going to make: in our view, US

leadership and active engagement at the United Nations is really essential for all of us to address the global threats that we face today. I'm not saying that we are more essential than other countries, but our participation and involvement really is very important.

I can give you the arguments for why we believe we need to be engaged in the UN, and cite a few examples. First, the issue of combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—a very high priority for the United States. Now, also in September of 2009, when President Obama was here to address the General Assembly, he chaired a Security Council session on non-proliferation and disarmament. It was a summit—it was the fifth summit in the history of the UN Security Council. It was also the first time that an American president had chaired the Council. And that meeting produced a pretty groundbreaking event: we had a resolution endorsed by all 15 members of the Council that was very clear about seeking to work towards a world without nuclear weapons and that committed to locking down vulnerable nuclear materials within four years. Since his chairing of that meeting, the United States has led efforts to impose very tough—the toughest sanctions ever—on Iran and North Korea for their proliferation activities. These strong resolutions have led other countries, including Canada, the European Union states, and South Korea, to adopt additional measures.

We've also worked very hard at the United Nations to bolster the work of the 1540 Committee. And 1540 is a committee, is based on the Resolution 1540, of course, which criminalizes the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors. This committee works to assist states to build capacity, to enact legislation, and enforcement measures to combat proliferation. And, of course, we know there are challenges ahead on the non-proliferation scene, and we will continue to work very hard to promote strict implementation of the existing resolutions on Iran and North Korea, who continue to violate existing agreements and defy their international obligations to cease their nuclear activities.

Second issue—very important issue and one that is very clearly in the UN role—and this on preventing conflict and helping peace around the world. Now, we're strong supporters, like other member states of the UN, of UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. And I'd like to cite a fact for you: that UN peacekeepers are a fraction of the cost of deploying a similar, all-US force. The General Accounting Office has said that it is one-eighth of the cost of deploying US military for similar purposes. We greatly appreciate this burden-sharing. Other countries are working with us in keeping the peace in many conflict and post-conflict areas. We're a strong supporter of improving UN peacekeeping. We know that peacekeeping is stretched, we know we have many, many more missions than we have the ability, really, to operate these days, and so we've been working very hard with the UN Secretariat and other members of the Security Council in streamlining the efforts to stand up peacekeeping operations. On peacebuilding—also, a very important issue—if we don't worry about building the peace, we can't keep the peace. So we work very hard on the Peacebuilding Commission in trying to include peacebuilding efforts in all of the peacekeeping missions, and we were instrumental, last year, in getting Liberia on the Commission's agenda.

I'd like to cite another aspect of maintaining peace in the world, and this is the UN efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obviously two countries of incredibly importance to the United States, given our military activities there. We are very fortunate to have two excellent UN political missions in those countries. They're helping to stabilize those countries, they're helping to move them forward along the democratic path. We lobbied very successfully for expanding their presence and areas of competence.

Now I know you are all interested in Sudan so I'll just speak about that briefly. Obviously we've worked very closely with members of the Security Council, other members of the UN, the UN Secretariat, on the referendum that was held in January. We think of this as one of the success stories, if you will, of our cooperation at the UN. We played a very instrumental role in the referendum coming out peacefully; we know there's a lot more to be done. Concerned about the violence that has taken place—that has taken place in Abyei, that has taken place in Southern Kordofan state—we know that in order to see a comprehensive peace agreement fully and properly implemented, that the international community is going to have to continue to be engaged.

The third area, I'd like to just say that's important to us here is the UN humanitarian and development agencies and the role that they play. And often, UN agencies go where others cannot, where it might not be quite so acceptable for the United States to be there or the European Union. But the UN can play this impartial role and is able to go to many places that enable them to save lives, provide water, food, medicine, shelter. I would say that the specialized agencies and programs at the UN are really the unsung heroes of the UN system. We are a large contributor to these initiatives, the agencies and programs I've mentioned. We deliver a significant share of our assistance through them, whether it be in conflict zones in Darfur to flood-affected areas of Pakistan or to earthquake-stricken Haiti, and we're very grateful for what the UN does.

Now, on development issues. The UN's Millennium Development Goals are extremely important, an important way to measure how countries are moving forward, really, to provide the kinds of services, goods, lives for the people. We believe it's very important to follow and help implement these development goals. President Obama's been very clear in setting these goals to our goals. You know, extreme poverty can lead to war, conflict, trafficking—drug trafficking, trafficking of persons—all kinds of things. Addressing this issue is not just the right thing to do, but it also makes the world safer and makes Americans safer.

Now, finally, I want to address the issue of universal values that are enshrined in the UN Charter, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Now, we take these values seriously, and believe that all UN member states must respect them as well. The UN's credibility requires it to live up to its founding principles, especially in bodies like the Human Rights Council. Secretary Clinton was very clear when we joined the Council and said that we're joining not because we don't see its flaws, but because it gives us the best chance to be a constructive influence. And since we have joined the Council, we have seen some significant changes. And I'll give you just a few examples. The Council has established a commission of inquiry for Libya and Cote d'Ivoire. It's established a special rapporteur on Iran and one on Freedom of Assembly and Association. It's spotlighted abuses in Kyrgyzstan, Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We've been very, very clear that members of the Human Rights Council should respect the very values that the institution is to uphold. And we've seen in the last year Syria and Iran have withdrawn their candidacies for membership, that the Council, that the Human Rights Council, recommended to the General Assembly that Libya's membership be suspended. So we think that, with its flaws, there is still an opportunity in working with others on the Human Rights Council to do some good in the world. In New York we fought for and won the protection of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights at the United Nations. Now last year, working with a number likeminded countries and friends around the world, we were able to get consultative status for a group called the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. We reversed an attempt to block their gaining a consultative status and they now have a voice at the UN's Economic and Social Council.

We have lobbied hard for the creation of UN Women. It's an agency I know that you all know, you are familiar with their aims to strengthen and streamline efforts to promote women and gender equality around the world. I attended the lunch that the Women's Foreign Policy Group hosted for Michelle Bachelet a month or so ago [[Transcript](#)]. I think you all realize that she is very dynamic, very focused, and that this agency has tremendous promise.

A bit about the challenges that we face now. Let's talk a little bit about North Africa and the Middle East—very tumultuous times. And we have been very clear on the principles that are guiding us in our response to the events of the last six months or so in North Africa and the Middle East. The first is that we oppose the use of violence against unarmed protestors; the second, we support universal rights which include the freedoms of speech, assembly, religion, the right to self-determination, equality for men and women under the rule of law; and the third, is that we support reforms and will continue to support reforms that can meet the legitimate aspirations of people throughout the region.

Now, on Libya, we have helped lead an internationally-sanctioned action to protect civilians. And we have taken steps to bolster the legitimacy of the Transitional National Council [TNC]—the opposition group. Secretary Clinton has been clear that the Transitional National Council is the legitimate interlocutor for the Libyan people during this interim period. It's important, we believe, for the international community to support the TNC so that they can help provide the humanitarian assistance and meet the humanitarian needs of the people of Libya. Resolution 1973—the resolution that authorized all necessary measures to protect civilians—was really a landmark resolution for the Council. And I'd just like to remind you that when the Council adopted this resolution when Colonel Qadhafi was less than 48 hours from the doors of Benghazi. We initiated work on this resolution at the request of the Arab League. It was, as you know, a controversial resolution. It was adopted, and now we have every intent to implement it fully.

On Syria: very disturbing reports we are seeing about Syrian authorities instructing security forces to use tanks and helicopters, gunships, against the people. We believe it's unfortunate that there isn't yet strong consensus in the Security Council to put pressure on the Assad regime. We think that pressure is necessary, and we have made clear it's our view that in Syria, as elsewhere, those who are protesting peacefully for greater rights, greater freedom, deserve the support of the United States.

Now we've called on the Syrian government to stop the violence. We've called on them bilaterally—we know others have as well. We've called on them to give immediate humanitarian access to the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross], other humanitarian organizations, and to allow entry for a fact-finding team from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as the Human Rights Council called for. We have not seen any progress on those actions yet.

We are also concerned about the involvement in Syrian affairs of Iran. Iran has been quite hypocritical about the events in the region. It's aligned itself with the aspirations of protestors while at home, brutally repressing its own people. We're seeing now a wave in North Africa and the Middle East which...the genie is out of the bottle, if you will, and I think it is in all of our interests to try to help the people obtain the kinds of rights and fulfill their aspirations that we all have.

Now, we expect a lot of the United Nations. And we are going to get more and more tasks to fulfill, it's very clear. The agenda is increasing, the kinds of activities were asking of the UN are more complex, to [Inaudible] peacekeeping. We need to be able to have an effective UN if we expect to achieve our priorities.

Again I will quote President Obama—it is my last quote—but he was very clear when he came to the UN in 2009. He said it was an “imperfect but indispensable institution.” And if it is indispensable to us, it is in our interest to make it better. Now, we can make it better by certainly making programs more effective, not only peacekeeping but sanctions, other initiatives, avoiding overlap. We can make it better by having greater budgetary discipline, greater accountability, transparency, something we are going to work very hard toward. And we are very encouraged that the Secretary General has pledged to address UN reform in his second term and has just named someone as head of task force.

I will stop there. I look forward to a discussion with you. I'm very, very pleased to have you here. You are all tremendous leaders in your fields, in foreign policy, and I look forward to the interchange. [Applause.]

**Ms. Ellis:** Thank you very much.

[The question and answer portion of this program was off the record.]