

Initiatives to Bolster Science, Technology in Muslim Communities

Clinton names U.S. science and technology envoys to collaborate on programs

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MEDIA NOTE

Secretary Clinton Announces New Initiatives to Bolster Science and Technology Collaboration With Muslim Communities Around the World

In remarks at the Forum for the Future in Marrakesh today, Secretary Clinton announced new initiatives to bolster science and technology collaboration with Muslim communities around the world. The Secretary named Dr. Bruce Alberts, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, and Dr. Ahmed Zewail as the first three U.S. Science and Technology Envoys and announced that the State Department will expand positions for environment, science, technology, and health officers at U.S. embassies.

"We want to help Muslim majority communities develop the capacity to meet economic, social and ecological challenges through science, technology, and innovation," Secretary Clinton said.

The U.S. Science Envoy program is part of President Obama's "New Beginning" initiative with Muslim communities around the world that he launched in a June 4 speech in Cairo, Egypt. He pledged that the United States would "appoint new science envoys to collaborate on programs that develop new sources of energy, create green jobs, digitize records, clean water, and grow new crops." The initiative received key support from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Senator Richard Lugar.

In the coming months, the first Science Envoys will travel to countries in North Africa, the Middle East, and South and Southeast Asia. They will engage their counterparts, deepen partnerships in all areas of science and technology, and foster meaningful collaboration to meet the greatest challenges facing the world today in health, energy, the environment, as well as in water and resource management. Additional U.S. scientists and engineers will be invited to join the Science Envoy program to expand it to other Muslim countries and regions of the globe.

Dr. Bruce Alberts is widely recognized for his work in the fields of biochemistry and molecular biology. Dr. Alberts is a professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of California, San Francisco. As president of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) from 1993 to 2005, he was instrumental in developing the landmark National Science Education standards that have been implemented in school systems throughout the U.S.

Dr. Elias Zerhouni, M.D., was director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) from 2002 to 2008. Dr. Zerhouni is currently a senior advisor to Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and was instrumental in creating the University's Institute for Cell Engineering. Dr. Zerhouni received his medical degree at the University of Algiers School of Medicine and completed his residency at the John Hopkins School of Medicine.

Dr. Ahmed Zewail is the Linus Pauling Chair Professor of Chemistry and Professor of Physics at the California Institute of Technology and Director of the Institute's Physical Biology Center for Ultrafast Science and Technology. Dr. Zewail was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1999 for his pioneering work in femtosience, which allowed observation of exceedingly rapid molecular transformations. Most recently, Dr. Zewail was appointed to the Presidential Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

The envoys will be supported by new embassy officers who will also engage with international partners on the full range of environmental, scientific and health issues, from climate change and the protection of oceans and wildlife to cooperation on satellites and global positioning systems. They will work with multilateral institutions, non-governmental organizations and private sector partners to promote responsible environmental governance, foster innovation, and increase public engagement on shared environmental and health challenges.

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