News Release

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US Secretary of State Kerry Emphasized Forceful Diplomacy

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- Kerry lays out newly assertive, but non-militarily focused, global engagement policy
- Focuses engagement on hotspots in Iran, Syria, and especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- The theme of the 44th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting is The Reshaping of the World: Consequences for Society, Politics and Business
- For more information, visit: http://wef.ch/Davos

Davos-Klosters, Switzerland, 24 January 2014 – In a full-throated defence of America ' s forward-leaning stance abroad, John F. Kerry, US Secretary of State, hit back at critics who have claimed that the United States is disengaging from world affairs. " I want to make it clear that nothing could be further from the truth, " said Kerry.

Speaking at the 44th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, he blamed the misperception on the false idea that the United States only projected its influence through military force, whereas the Obama administration has instead used " forceful diplomacy " .

While Kerry enumerated recent US diplomatic successes from across the globe, he focused his remarks on three particularly challenging problems in the Middle East: the Iranian nuclear programme, the war in Syria and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He offered a direct challenge to Iran ' s President Hassan Rouhani, who told the Annual Meeting yesterday that Iran has no intention of producing nuclear weapons: " If you are serious about a peaceful programme, it is not hard to prove to the world that your intentions are peaceful. " He hailed recent diplomatic breakthroughs which, if consolidated, would mean a safer Israel, region and world.

On Syria, Kerry decried the “ enormous, almost unimaginable human tragedy unfolding before our eyes ” . With more evidence of torture at the hands of the Assad regime being uncovered this week, as the international community looks to the future of Syria, it is clear that “ Bashar al-Assad cannot be part of that future, ” Kerry said. He added that the United States will focus its efforts on “ forceful diplomacy ” , which recently resulted in an agreement to take chemical weapons out of the picture. But “ Assad will never have, nor be able to earn back, the legitimacy to bring that country back together. ”

Finally, Kerry pledged a full-fledged effort to resolve “ the most intractable of all conflicts: the struggle to make peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. ” The undertaking will not be easy, and will require committed partners such as the Arab League and the European Union. But the stakes could not be higher. “ There are some people that assert this may be the last shot. I don ’ t know the answer to that. I don ’ t want to find out the hard way. ” Kerry emphasized that the “ end game ” is clear and should involve secure Palestinian and Israeli states, a withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Occupied Territories and substantive economic gains for both parties. Israel alone could see

its annual gross domestic product increase by up to 6% in the wake of a peace agreement with the Palestinians, Kerry claimed.

Speaking about the United States, Kerry emphasized that " not one country " has invested as much effort in the Middle East.

He also briefly highlighted other US efforts across the globe, including the pursuit of closer economic links between the European Union and the United States and similar trade initiatives through the Trans-Pacific Partnership. In Africa, the United States helped to demobilize the M23 armed group in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and " we have helped to achieve a ceasefire in South Sudan. " On the current strife in Kyiv, Kerry emphasized: " We will stand with the people of Ukraine. "

Notes to Editors

More information about the Annual Meeting 2014 is available at http://wef.ch/davos2014
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